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THE
T H E O R Y
OF
L A N G U A G E.
IN TWO PARTS.

PART I. Of the Origin and General Nature of Speech.
PART II. Of Universal Grammar.

BY
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SOPHICAL SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA.

*Ex elementis constant, ex principiis oriuntur, omnia : Et ex judicii
consuetudine in rebus MINUTIS adhibita pendet sepiissime in maxi-
mis vera atque accurata scientia. S. CLARKE. Pref. ad Homer.*

A NEW EDITION, enlarged and corrected.

L O N D O N :

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THIS Treatise was printed some time ago in a Collection of Essays by the same hand. It is now published separate, by the advice of several men of learning, who have been pleased to approve of it; and to say, that it may be particularly useful in Schools, and to those Young Persons, who, in their course of study, may be making a transition from the more obvious to the abstruser parts of knowledge;—from the elements of Grammar, History, and Physicks, to the first principles of Logick and Moral Philosophy. In this last respect, the author has, from repeated experience, and long before he thought of making it publick, found it to have a beneficial tendency.

A Philosophical Examination of the principles of Grammar is a profitable exercise to the mental powers of Young People; and promotes, more perhaps than any other study within their sphere, clearness of apprehension,

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prehension, and correctness of language. Nor are the subtleties, inseparable from this part of science, hard to be understood, even in early life, when explained in a simple and familiar style, and with a due regard to the gradual expansion of the human intellect.

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ERRATA.

- Page 7. line 19. read—He lived and died
110. line 11. read—characters imply
171. line 3. read—*vehementer*
180. line 1. read—idiom.
293. line ult. read—Il serpente
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The Theory of Language.

PART I.

Of the Origin and General Nature of Speech.

CHAP. I.

*Man, the only Animal capable of Speech. —
Speech, an Art, acquired by Imitation. —
Natural Signs of human Thought. — Arti-
ficial Signs of Thought: — first, Visible; —
secondly, Audible.*

THE faculties of the human mind have long ago been divided into those of Perception and those of Volition; the former being supposed to be the inlets to knowledge; the latter, the instruments of action. But, in many cases, we cannot perceive without an exertion of the will; nor act, without adding to our stock of knowledge; and therefore, the division, though sufficiently accurate perhaps, is not perfectly so. The faculty of Speech is Active, because we act, while we make use of it; and may also be called Perceptive, because by means of it we perceive what passes in the minds of one another.

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But

But whether we call it Active, or Perceptive, or to what class of human powers we refer it, is a matter of no consequence. It is one of the distinguishing characters of our nature; none of the inferior animals being in any degree possessed of it.

For we must not call by the name of *Speech* that imitation of human articulate voice, which parrots and some other birds are capable of; Speech implying thought, and consciousness, and the power of separating and arranging our ideas, which are faculties peculiar to rational minds. In Greek, the same word *Logos* denotes both Speech and Reason: a proof, that the Greeks considered Reason and Speech as very nearly allied.

That some inferior animals should be able to mimic human articulation, will not seem wonderful, when we recollect, that even by machines certain words have been articulated. But that the parrot should annex thought to the word he utters, is as unlikely, as that a machine should do so. *Rogue* and *knave* are in every parrot's mouth: but the ideas they stand for are incomprehensible, except by beings endued with reason and a moral faculty.

It has however been a common opinion, and is probable enough, that there may be, among irrational animals, something, which
by

by a *figure* we may call *Language*, even as the instinctive economy of bees is figuratively called *Government*. This at least is certain, that the natural voices of one animal are in some degree intelligible, or convey particular feelings, or impulses, to others of the same species. The summons of the hen is understood by the chickens: and a similar mode of communication may be observed, in many of the irrational tribes, between the parents and offspring, and between one animal and his customary associate. Nay, to dogs and horses, and even to other creatures of less sagacity, the voice of their master soon becomes familiar; and they learn to perform certain actions, on receiving certain audible or visible signals, from those whom they are wont to obey. This, however, is a proof, rather of their docility, and of the quickness of their eye and ear, than of any *intelligence* in regard to language. And it is more to the present purpose to remark, that in one and the same brute animal different passions often express themselves by different voices. How unlike, for example, are the cries of the same dog, when he barks at the stranger, snarls at his enemy, whines with hunger or cold, howls with sorrow when he loses his master, or whimpers with joy when he finds him again!*

But

* These, and some other varieties in the voice of this animal, are described by Lucretius with exquisite propriety.

But these, and the like animal voices, have no analogy with human speech.—For, first, men speak by art and imitation, whereas the voices in question are wholly instinctive: for that a dog, which had never heard another bark, would notwithstanding bark himself, admits of no doubt; and that a man, who had never heard any language, would not speak any, is equally certain.—Secondly, the voices of brute animals are not broken, or resolvable, into distinct elementary sounds, like those of man when he speaks, (who is, from this circumstance, called by Homer and Hesiod *Merops* or *voice-dividing*); nor are they susceptible of that variety, which would be necessary for the communication of a very few sentiments: and it is pretty certain, that, previously to instruction, the young animals comprehend their meaning, as well as the old.—And, thirdly, these voices seem intended by nature to express, not distinct ideas, but such feelings only, as it may be for the good of the species, or for the ad-

Irritata canum cum primum magna molossœ
Mollia ricta frenunt duos nudantia dentes;
Longe alio sonitu rabie distracta minantur,
Et cum jam latrant, et vocibus omnia complent.
At catulos blande cum lingua lambere tentant,
Aut ubi eos jactant pedibus, morfuque petentes,
Suspendis veros imitantur dentibus haustus,
Longe alio pacto gannitu vocis adulant;
Et cum deserti lauantur in adibus, aut cum
Plorantes lugunt lammillo corpore plagas.

V. 1062.

vantage

vantage of man, that they should have the power of uttering : in which, as in all other respects, they are analogous, not to our speaking, but to our weeping, laughing, groaning, screaming, and other natural and audible expressions of passion.

In this light they are considered by Aristotle, in the following passage. “ Man of
 “ all animals is only possessed of speech.
 “ Bare sound indeed may be the sign of
 “ what is pleasurable or painful ; and for
 “ that reason is it common even to other
 “ animals also. For so far we perceive even
 “ their nature can go, that they have a sense
 “ of those *feelings*, and *signify them* to each
 “ other. But Speech is made to indicate
 “ what is expedient, and what hurtful, and,
 “ in consequence of this, what is just, and
 “ unjust. It is therefore given to men :
 “ because this, with respect to other ani-
 “ mals, is to men alone peculiar, that of
 “ Good and Evil, Just and Unjust, they
 “ only possess a sense or feeling *.”

Some animals seem to employ their voice, without any purpose of giving information to others of the species. The lark sings a great part of the day, even when alone. This affords a presumption, that her song has nothing in it of the nature of speech.

* Translated by Mr. Harris. See *Treatise concerning Happiness*, note fifteenth.

That energy seems natural to the animal when soaring in the sky : perhaps it may be of benefit to her, as an amusement : certainly it is very pleasing to the ear of man.

Some birds sing, while preparing their nests, and taking care of their young, and are silent the rest of the year. But it is not the nature of speech to be periodical : whereas those energies must be so, which are the effect of periodical feelings. Others of the brute creation are most apt to utter their voices, when the weather is about to change. But can we suppose, that they are then *thinking* of the weather, or that they *intend* to give information concerning it ? Is it not more likely, that, as Virgil observes, their bodies being affected by alterations of the atmosphere which we cannot perceive *, they are then, without any purpose, expressing instinctively certain pleasant, or painful sensations ; even as the infant of a month old does, while it is crying, or smiling ?

We learn to speak, by imitating others ; and therefore he cannot speak, who does not

- * Haud equidem credo, quia sit divinitus illis
Ingenium, aut rerum fato prudentia major :
Verum, ubi tempestas et cœli mobilis humor
Mutavere vias, et Jupiter humidus austris.
Densat erant quæ rara modo, et quæ densa relaxat,
Vertuntur species animorum, et pectora motus
Nunc alios, alios dum nubila ventus agbat,
Concupiunt. Hinc ille avium concentus in agris,
Et lætæ pecudes, et ovantes guttate corvi.

Georgic. i. 415.

hear.

Ch. I. OF LANGUAGE.

7

hear. It was once a vulgar notion, that a person brought up from infancy without hearing any language would of himself speak Hebrew; this having been thought the first, the most sacred, and the most natural dialect. But it is now acknowledged, and is even said to have been proved by experiment, that such a person would be dumb; or, at least, would employ his voice in imitating the inarticulate sounds he might have heard, or in expressing certain feelings by groans, laughter, cries, and the like modes of natural utterance.

I formerly knew a poor man, who spoke a very singular dialect. His name was William More; his age about sixty. He was so deaf, that his neighbours doubted, whether he could be made to hear any sound whatever. He had lived and died in the parish where he was born, was never thirty miles from home, and, so far as I know, never saw a foreigner. The language he uttered was intelligible to those only, who had bestowed some attention upon it; and he himself understood no other. It was made up, partly of English or Scotch words, most of them much altered, and partly of other words that were altogether his own. Of the former class, I remember, that his usual affirmation was *trot*, probably corrupted from *trotb*; *corn* was *tera*; *come* was *tum*; and instead of *soldier* he said *sholta*. Of the latter sort may be reckoned, *odee*, signifying good; *blava*,

evil; virrup, a duck; raad, vehemently; furrè, to cut, or kill; plode, a man; pitoot, a gentleman. As he had little knowlege but what belonged to the business of a labourer, his ideas were few, and his language very defective; consisting chiefly of nouns, adjectives, and verbs, with some adverbs: his words had no inflection: and I think he used neither articles, nor conjunctions, and scarce any pronouns. He looked steadily in the face of those who spoke to him, and seemed to gather the meaning, by sight, from the motion of their lips.

Though I was then very young, I had great curiosity to know the history of his early years: but could never learn more than this; that there was nothing remarkable in it; and that his father, and mother, and all his relations and neighbours, spoke like other people.—It seems probable, that he had never heard very acutely, but did not become quite deaf till he was four or five years old: the consequence of which would be, his retaining some words imperfectly, and forgetting many others. For, if he had from his birth been as deaf as when I knew him, he never could have spoken at all: if he had been under that age when he lost his hearing, he could hardly have articulated the letter R so distinctly as he did: and if he had been much older, he would no doubt have remembered more of his mother tongue.

The

The peculiar formation of his own words it is impossible to account for, unless we were better informed in regard to his infancy and education. All his syllables were easily pronounced; he had little emphasis, and no accent, nor any diphthongal sounds: and his articulations were performed by the lips, the tongue, and the palate, being seldom nasal, and, I think, never guttural. He was a chearful, sober, honest man; and spoke reverently of the Supreme Being, by a name, which, though I have not forgotten, I do not chuse to set down. *—These facts, though little can be inferred from them, are not unworthy of notice.

We speak, in order to communicate our thoughts to one another; which our social

* Bishop Burnet gives a similar instance of M. Godet's daughter of Geneva; who at the age of two years lost her hearing, and never after could hear what was said to her; though she was not wholly insensible to great noises. By observing the motions of the mouth and lips of others, she had acquired so many words, that out of these she had formed a sort of jargon, in which she could hold conversation whole days with those who could speak her language. She knew nothing that was said to her, unless she saw the motion of their mouths who spoke; so that in the night they were obliged to light candles, when they wanted to speak to her. She had a sister, with whom she had practised her language more than with any body else; and, what is strange, though not unaccountable, by laying her hand, in the dark, on her lips and face, she could perceive by their motion what was said, and so could discourse with her in the dark.

Burnet, Letter iv. page 248.
affections

affections incline us powerfully to do : and the practice of speaking improves our natural faculty of separating, arranging, and comparing our ideas. I call that faculty natural, and consider it as the foundation of the art of speech : for, without it, though some animals might be so taught, or a machine so constructed, as to articulate words, it would be impossible to speak rationally, or with intelligence.

As what passes in my mind cannot itself appear to another man, it must be imparted (if at all imparted) by means of *signs*, or outward actions obvious to sense. And they, as expressive of human thought, may be divided into Natural and Artificial.

The *Natural Signs* of thought are those changes in the complexion, eyes, features, and attitude, and those peculiar tones of the voice, which all men know to be significant of certain passions and sentiments. Thus Anger, Joy, Sorrow, Hope, Fear, Scorn, Contentment, Pity, Admiration, when under no restraint, appear in the voice, looks, and behaviour : and the appearance is every where understood, either by a natural instinct ; or by our having learned experimentally, that a certain sign accompanies, and indicates, a certain feeling, or idea. And that this kind of signs admits of considerable variety, is evident, not only from the pantomime, in which the whole progress
of

of a dramattick fable is represented in dumb show, and by natural signs only; but also from the manifold expressions of human thought, which are exhibited to the eye by painters and statuaries. Yet, when compared with the endless variety of our ideas, these natural signs will appear to be but few. And many thoughts there are, in the mind of every man, which produce no sensible alteration in the body.

Artificial Signs, or Language, have, therefore, been employed universally for the purpose of communicating thought; and are found so convenient, as to have superseded in a great measure, at least in many nations, the use of the Natural. Yet, where language has been little improved, as among savages, and is of course defective in clearness and energy, it is for the most part enforced by looks, gestures, and voices, naturally significant: and even some polite nations, the French for example, from an inborn vivacity, or acquired restlessness, accompany their speech with innumerable gestures, in order to make it the more emphatical; while people of a graver turn, like the English and Spaniards, and who have words for all their ideas, trust to language alone for a full declaration of their mind, and seldom have recourse to gesture, unless when violence of passion throws them off their guard. However, as the natural signs *may*
give

give strength and grace to the artificial, it is expected, even where the greatest national gravity prevails, that, in his publick performances, the former should, in such a degree, be adopted by the orator, as to show that he is in earnest, and by the stage-player, as that he may the more effectually imitate nature.

For elocution is not perfect, unless the artificial signs of thought are enforced by the natural, or at least by such of them, as are neither troublesome to the speaker, nor offensive to the hearer. Words of indignation pronounced with a soft voice and a smile, jokes accompanied with weeping, or lamentation with laughter, would be ridiculous: but, on the other hand, if a player, in reciting a melancholy strain, were to burst out into real tears, he would lose that self-command, without which nothing can be done with elegance. Actors will never express naturally what they do not intensely feel*: yet their feelings must not divest them of their presence of mind, nor disqualify them for any exertion that belongs to their part. And I remember, that, on asking Garrick, how it was possible for one who felt as he did, to act with so much nature and grace, and with such perfect self-

* See *Hor. Ar. Poet.* ver. 99—111.—and an *Essay on Poetry and Music* as they affect the Mind. Part I, chap. 3.

command,

command, he told me, that I had touched upon the most essential, and what he had always found the most difficult, point of theatrical imitation.

In that oratory, which is addressed to the passions, and which in this country is little used, the natural signs of thought must enforce the artificial with as strong an energy, as in the action of the theatre. But the publick speaker, whose aim is to instruct and persuade, gives scope to those natural expressions only, that imply conviction, and earnestness, with a mild and benevolent demeanour, and sometimes a modest dignity becoming the cause of truth and virtue. And in polite conversation, no voices, looks, or attitudes are allowable, but such as betoken kindness, attention, good-humour, and a desire to please.

Des Cartes, and some other philosophers, have endeavoured to explain the physical cause, which connects a human passion with its correspondent natural sign. They wanted to show, from the principles of motion and of the animal economy, why Fear, for example, produces trembling and paleness; why Laughter attends the perception of incongruity; why Anger inflames the blood, contracts the brows, and distends the nostrils; why Shame is accompanied with blushing; why Despair fixes the teeth together, distorts the joints, and disfigures the features; why
Scorn

Scorn shoots out the lip; why Sorrow overflows at the eyes; why Envy and Jealousy look askance; and why Admiration raises the eyebrows, and opens the mouth. Such inquiries may give rise to ingenious observation; but are not in other respects useful, because never attended with success. He who established the union of soul and body knows how, and by what intermediate instruments, the one operates upon the other. But to man this is a mystery unsearchable. We can only say, that tears accompany sorrow, and the other natural signs their respective passions and sentiments, because such is the will of our Creator, and the law of the human constitution.

The *Artificial* Signs of thought derive their meaning from human art and compact; and are not understood, except by those who have been taught how to use them. Of these any man may invent a system; and by their means converse, with those who are in the secret, so as that nobody else shall understand him.

They are divided into *Visible* and *Audible*. For, though human thoughts may be communicated by touch, (as people of certain professions are said to know a brother, and to make themselves known to him, by taking hold of his hand; and Mr. Sanderson of Cambridge, who was born blind, studied and taught geometry by diagrams cut in wood;) yet

yet tangible signs of thought are not in common use, nor at all requisite on ordinary occasions.

Of *Visible* Artificial Signs there may be many sorts. Dumb men use them in conversation, and enforce them by a variety of natural signs. And where a dumb man is known to make his thumb (for example) a sign of *good*, and his little finger of *evil*, his meaning is understood as well when he holds up or points to those organs, as if he were to utter the words *good* or *evil*. And, after he is instructed in the nature of written language, it would be no difficult matter to teach him how to make and use an alphabet, by pointing to the several joints of his fingers, or to other parts of his body; which among his friends would be of great benefit to him, both in the way of amusement, and as an inlet to knowledge. Dumb men of quick parts do generally express a word, or an idea, by a single sign; which is a more expeditious method than the other, but not so accurate, or so comprehensive.

This sort of visible alphabet, by which different parts of the hand represent different vowels and consonants, is much used, as I am told, in nunneries and boarding-schools; and conveys, when one becomes expert in it, sentiments as clearly, though not so quickly, as words could do,

At

At sea, when ships sail in company, visible signs are not only useful, but necessary. A system of these, for the use of the British navy, was invented by James II, about an hundred years ago; and is said to be so convenient, that it has not to this day been materially improved. Every British seaman in the King's service is trained up in the knowlege of them: and, to prevent mistakes from forgetfulness, every commander in the navy receives from the Admiralty a book, wherein are explained the meaning of the several signals, and the method of conveying orders or intelligence from one ship to any other in the squadron. These signals, many of which, that they may be the more significant, are accompanied with the firing of guns, are made, by hanging out, from the several parts of the ship, lights in the night-time, and flags and streamers of different colours by day. The fullest account of them, that I have seen, is in Chambers's Dictionary, under the word *Signal*.

The antients, particularly the Greeks, were remarkable for their ingenious contrivance of signals by fire. We are assured, that, in a mountainous country, they could in a moment, by means of torches, convey intelligence to a very great distance. They even invented a method of expressing, by the number and arrangement of flambeaus, every letter

letter of the alphabet; so that a guard on one eminence could converse, by spelling their words, with another many leagues off. There is an exact description of it in Polybius; and in the seventeenth book of the Antient History by Rollin; who adds, that he had seen a pamphlet, printed in 1702, and dedicated to the King of France by Mons. Marcel, which explained a system of signals, whereby any piece of news could be communicated by one ship to another at a distance, as quickly as it could be set down in writing.

Fire-signals are of great antiquity. Clytemnestra, at Argos, is said to have received, in this way, intelligence of the destruction of Troy, the very night in which it was taken. A fire, kindled by Agamemnon's order on mount Ida, was seen at Lemnos, where another was instantly lighted, which was repeated on Athos, and so forwarded from one eminence to another, where guards had been placed on purpose, till at last it shone on the heights of Arachne, and was descried by a watchman stationed on the top of Clytemnestra's palace. The progress of these signals is minutely described by Eschylus, in the tragedy of Agamemnon; which opens with a soliloquy of the watchman, complaining, that for nine years he had passed the night in that place without sleep, looking out for the promised signal. While
C he

he is speaking, he discovers it, and gives notice to the queen; who, in announcing the good news, informs the chorus, by what means it had been transmitted to her. The passage is curious; and proves at least, that signals by fire were well known in Greece in the days of Eschylus; who flourished five hundred years before Christ. Quintus Curtius relates, that they were frequent among the Asiatics in the time of Alexander: and we learn from Cesar and Livy, that they were used by the Romans. Traces of them are still to be seen on the tops of mountains in Spain. And in this kingdom there are several high hills, hollowed a little on the summit, which retain the marks of burning, and are by some believed to have been volcanoes; though I think it more probable, that they may have been stations, where fires were occasionally lighted to alarm the country. Of these I remember three in the neighbourhood of Inverness, each visible from the other, and about ten miles distant; and one in the county of Angus, not far from Aberlemno.

Any human action might be made the sign of thought; but all are not equally convenient. Our ideas arise and shift with great quickness; and therefore those actions or signs only can do them justice in the expression, which are easily performed, and of great variety, and in each variety obvious to sense. By means of an alphabet formed by pointing

to the joints of the fingers, and by other sorts of gesticulation, many human sentiments might no doubt be expressed; but visible signs of this kind are of no use in the dark, and when distant are not perceptible; nor do they admit of sufficient variety; nor are they so easy in the performance, as the necessities of life would often require. But Audible Signs are equally useful by night and by day, and may be understood at a considerable distance: and the sounds of one and the same human voice may be varied without end, and are, in all their varieties, easily managed, and by the human ear distinctly perceptible. Indeed, when we compare the ear with the voice of man, we are at a loss to determine, whether the one is the more admirable for its power of diversifying sounds, or the other for that of distinguishing them.—Audible Signs, therefore, constitute language in all nations. And if men could always be present with those to whom they wish to give information, signals, and every other visible sign of thought, would be unnecessary; and speech, as it is the readiest, would be the only, vehicle of human sentiment.

C H A P. II.

Of the organs of Speech, and the nature and powers of the human Voice.—Of Articulation. Vowel and Consonant Sounds,—their formation, and various classes. Thirty two or thirty three elementary sounds in the English tongue.

NOTWITHSTANDING the endless variety of human articulate voices, their elementary sounds are few and simple, at least in all the languages I am acquainted with.—But before I proceed to the elements of Speech, it may be proper to premise some observations on the nature and powers of the human voice.

Human Voice is air sent out from the lungs, and so agitated, or modified, in its passage through the windpipe and larynx, as to become distinctly audible. The windpipe, wezand, or rough artery, is that tube, which, on touching the forepart of our throat externally, we feel hard and uneven. It conveys air into the lungs for the purpose of respiration and speech. It consists of cartilages, circular before, that they may the better resist external injury; but soft and flattish on the opposite side, that they may not hurt the gullet, or esophagus; which lies close behind, and is the tube whereby what

we

we eat and drink is conveyed into the stomach. These cartilages are separated by fleshy membranes; by means of which the windpipe may be shortened or lengthened a little, and, when necessary, incurvated, without inconvenience.

The top, or upper part, of the windpipe is called the Larynx; consisting of four or five cartilages, that may be expanded or brought together, by the agency of certain muscles which operate all at the same time. In the middle of the larynx there is a small aperture, called the Glottis, through which the breath and voice are conveyed, but which, when we swallow any thing, is covered by a lid called the Epiglottis: for if any part of our food or drink were to get into the windpipe by this passage, it would occasion coughing, till it were thrown out again.

Galen, and many other philosophers, affirm, that both the larynx and the windpipe co-operate in rendering the breath vocal. But later authors have determined, and I think on good grounds, that the human voice is produced by two semicircular membranes in the middle of the larynx, which form by their separation the aperture that is termed the Glottis. The space between them is not wider than one tenth of an inch; through which the breath transmitted from the lungs must needs pass with considerable velocity. In its passage, it is supposed to

give a brisk vibratory motion to the membranous lips of the glottis, and so to form the sound which we call *voice*: by an operation, similar to that of the two lips of the reed of a hautboy, when one takes them in one's mouth, and blows into them.

It seems, however, necessary, in order to the production of voice, that, by an energy of our will, a certain degree of tenseness should be communicated to the larynx, or at least to the two membranes abovementioned: for we find, that we *can* breathe very strongly without vocal sound; and when we speak or sing, we are sensible of a peculiar tension or hardness in the organs of the throat, which seem to be more lax when we only breathe or whisper. When we are in great pain, these organs of themselves become tense, and transform our breathing into groans; a circumstance, that is often of use to us; by raising pity in others, or bringing them to our aid, when we are incapable of speech. And then, to repress our groans, by keeping the vocal membranes lax, requires an energy, which we do not care to continue, because it is fatiguing and painful. Hence we say, that groaning relieves us; and in fact it does so: at least, it is then more easy to groan, than to breathe without groaning.

The voice, thus formed, is strengthened and mellowed by a reverberation from the
palate,

palate, and other hollow places in the inside of the mouth and nostrils: and as these are better or worse shaped for this reverberation, the voice is said to be more or less agreeable. And thus the vocal organs of man appear to be, as it were, a species of flute, or hautboy; whereof the membranous lips of the glottis are the mouth, or reed, and the inside of the throat, palate and nostrils, the body: the windpipe being nothing more than the tube or canal, which conveys the wind from the lungs to the aperture of this musical instrument.

Take the reed of a hautboy, put it between your lips, and blow into it; and a distinct sound is heard: press it a little with your lips, blowing as before, and the sound becomes more acute or shrill: press it still more, that is, bring the two sides of the reed still closer, and the sound is still more acute. From this example we may partly conceive, in what manner the human voice is varied, with respect to the acuteness or gravity of its tones. The glottis is found to be narrower in women and young persons than in men; and hence mens voices are deeper, or graver, than those of boys and women. And we can at pleasure dilate or contract this aperture, and so fashion the tones of our voice into every variety of the musical scale. But all have not this faculty in the same degree. Some voices comprehend two, and,
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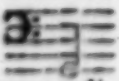
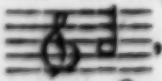
by straining, even three octaves. Others have hardly the command of one. Two octaves are no uncommon medium. Voices that go very deep can seldom rise high; and those which are of a shrill treble are unable to reach the low notes of the bass. In other words; when the aperture of the glottis is naturally wide, it cannot be made very narrow; and when it is naturally narrow, it cannot be made very wide. At least, this seems to be a general rule; but it is not without exceptions. And it is somewhat remarkable, that of those voices which are most necessary in harmony, as trebles and basses, there is great abundance; while counter-tenor voices, whereof one is sufficient in a numerous chorus, are not often met with.—As to the strength, or weakness, of the voice; it depends, on the strength or weakness of the lungs; on the greater or less force that is exerted in emitting the breath; and partly too, perhaps, on the shape and magnitude of those cavities in the throat and mouth, by which the sound is reverberated.

It is hardly possible for him, whose musical ear is naturally bad, ever to acquire such a command of the membranes that form the glottis, as to separate the tones of the voice by their true musical intervals: which to persons of a nice ear is so easy, even in infancy, that they find it difficult to do otherwise. Yet a nice ear is not always accom-
panied

panied with an exact voice. The voice, like every other faculty, may be improved by exercise, and grow worse by neglect: and there is, in the vocal organs of some people, a certain unpliableness, which no cultivation is able to overcome.

If we consider the many varieties of sound, which one and the same human voice is capable of uttering, together with the smallness of the diameter of the glottis; and reflect, that the same diameter must always produce the same tone, and, consequently, that to every change of tone a correspondent change of diameter is necessary; we must be filled with astonishment at the mechanism of these parts, and the fineness of the fibres that operate in producing effects so minute, so various, and in their proportions so exactly uniform. For it admits of proof, that the diameter of the human glottis is capable of at least sixty distinct degrees of contraction or enlargement, by each of which a different note is produced; and yet the greatest diameter of that aperture does not exceed one tenth of an inch. This, though certain in fact, is conceivable by those only, who can form an idea of that division, whereby an inch is parcelled out into six hundred parts. I speak not of extraordinary voices, whose powers may be incomparably greater; as indeed some authors have by calculation proved
that

that they are *. What is here affirmed will be found to hold true of any musical voice of tolerable volubility and compass. And if so, we need not wonder, that the best singers should often fail in the command of their voice. The fibres that minister to motions so exceedingly minute must themselves be very delicate; and therefore liable to be affected by the state of the air, and of the stomach, the general habit of the body, the

* That the variations of diameter here ascribed to the human glottis are only the half of what it is capable of, may be evinced as follows. Suppose a man can sing from *Gamut*  to *Alanire* of the treble , which is no extraordinary compass, being only two octaves and one great tone. Let him take his fundamental note from the third string of the violoncello, and sing two octaves. Then let the instrument be tuned one *comma* (or the ninth part of a great tone) higher, and let him take his fundamental note, and sing two octaves, as before: and so proceed, raising the tone of the instrument in the same proportion, and singing two octaves accordingly, till the sound of the string be nine commas, or one great tone, higher than it was at the first. In this way he sings sixteen octaves, every one of which is in every note different from the rest. Now in sixteen different octaves there are one hundred and twenty different tones, which are all sounded by the voice of him who makes this experiment: in the course of which, the diameter of his glottis, though no more than one tenth of an inch, must have undergone one hundred and twenty distinct variations. So that, if an inch were divided into twelve hundred parts, the divisions would not be more minute than those variations are, which in the case supposed would affect the diameter of the human glottis.

emotions

emotions of the mind, and a thousand other circumstances.

When we sing the notes of a tune without applying syllables, we use and vary our voice without articulation, and our vocal organs perform no other part than that of a wind instrument of musick. Speech is made up of *articulate* voices: and what we call *Articulation* is performed, not by the lungs, wind-pipe, or larynx, but by the action of the throat, palate, teeth, tongue, lips, and nostrils. Yet, in speaking with *accent* *, the membranes of the glottis must be continually employed in contracting and dilating themselves; because, as will be observed hereafter, the voice is then continually rising and falling in its tone: and, in speaking with *emphasis* *, the lungs are continually employed, not only in supplying that breath of which the voice is made, but also in emitting it sometimes with more and sometimes with less force; because, as will appear by and by, the voice is then continually varying its energy in respect of strength and softness.—Speech is articulated voice: Whispering is articulated breath.

Articulation begins not, till the breath, or voice, has passed through the larynx. The simplest articulate voices are those which proceed from an open mouth, and are by Grammarians called *Vocal* or *Vowel* sounds.

* See the fourth and fifth chapters.

In transmitting these, the aperture of the mouth may be pretty large, or somewhat smaller, or very small: which is one cause of the variety of vowels; a particular sound being produced by each particular aperture. Moreover, in passing through an open mouth, the voice may be gently acted upon, by the lips; or by the tongue and palate; or by the tongue and throat: whence another source of variety in vowel sounds.

Thus nine simple vowels may be formed; which Wallis, in his excellent Grammar, endeavours to prove are all heard in the English language, though we have not nine vowel letters to express them. But Dr. Kenrick, in the preface to his Rhetorical Dictionary, shows, that the number of our simple vowel sounds is eleven*. Perhaps the pronunciation of English may have changed a little since the time of Wallis, who flourished an hundred and thirty years ago; and there may be vowel sounds in it now, which were not in it then. This will not seem an

* These eleven sounds are, according to Kenrick, as follows. Numb. 1. Cur, Sir, Her, Monk, Blood.—2. Bull, Wolf, Push.—3. Pool, Troop.—4. Oft, Soft, George.—5. What, Was, War.—6. No, For, Beau.—7. Hard, Part, Laugh, Heart.—8. And, Hat, Bar.—9. Bay, They, Fail, Tale, Great, Dale, Vale.—10. Met, Sweat, Head, Bread, Realm, Ready.—11. Fit, Guilt, English.—But are not the vowels Number 2 and 3, the same in the sound, and different only in the quantity; the former short, and the latter long? If this be granted, our simple vowel sounds are reduced to Ten.

extravagant supposition, when it is considered that Wallis gives the same sound to the vowel in *lamb* and *dame*, which are now pronounced differently; makes the vowel sound in *muse* simple, which is now diphthongal; and informs us, that some old people in his time retained so much of Chaucer's pronunciation, as to say *house* and *horse*, articulating in these and the like words the final *e**, which is now invariably mute. In other tongues there may be simple vowel sounds quite different from ours. Such is that of the French *u*; which is not heard in England, or in the North of Scotland; but in all the lowland provinces of North Britain, from the Grampian mountains to the Tweed, is still in very frequent use.

When the voice, in its passage through the mouth, is totally intercepted, or strongly compressed, there is formed a certain modification of articulate sound, which, as expressed by a character in writing, is called a *Consonant*. Silence is the effect of a total interception; and indistinct sound, of a strong compression: and therefore a consonant is not of itself a distinct articulate voice; and its influence in varying the tones of language is not clearly perceived, unless it be accompanied by an opening of the mouth, that is, by

* This is still done by the vulgar in Scotland; but the words so pronounced are diminutives. Thus *house* is a small house, *horse* a little horse. They also say, *Mannie*, *Gunnie*, *Staffie*, &c. meaning a little man, a little gun, a little staff.

a vowel.—The consonants that proceed from an *interception* of the voice, are called *Clauser* or *Closer* by Wallis ; who very ingeniously divides them into classes, upon the following principle.

The human voice, in passing through the mouth, may be *intercepted*, by the lips, or by the tongue and palate, or by the tongue and throat : and each of these interceptions may happen, when the voice is directed to go out by the mouth only ; or through the nostrils only ; or partly through the mouth, and partly through the nose.

Thus, if the voice, directed to the mouth only, be totally intercepted by the lips, we articulate what is expressed by the letter P ; if by the tongue and palate, T ; if by the tongue and throat, K. These three consonants are properly called *mutes* ; because these interceptions, unless preceded or followed by a vowel, produce absolute silence.

Again ; if the voice, directed to go forth, partly through the mouth, and partly through the nose, be totally intercepted by the lips, we form the sound expressed by B ; if by the tongue and palate, D ; if by the tongue and throat, the simple sound of G, as it is heard in the word *go*. This triad of consonants are called *Semi-mutes* ; because without the assistance of any vowel they produce a faint sound, which continues for a little time, and
seems

seems partly to pass out by the nose, and partly to reverberate from the roof of the mouth. And hence, when the nose is shut, it is not easy for us to give them a distinct utterance.

Further ; while the voice is passing out by the nostrils chiefly, if the lips be closed, we hear the sound of M ; if the forepart of the tongue be applied to the palate, N is formed ; and if the tongue be drawn a little backward towards the throat, we produce the final sound of the words *sing, ring, long, &c.* These are called *Semi-vowels* ; because of themselves, and without the aid of any vowel, they make a sound which is not very indistinct, and may be continued as long as we please. If, while we are sounding them, we suddenly shut our nose, the sound ceases entirely ; which is a proof, that it goes out by the nostrils. And if we attempt to articulate them, after having first shut our nose, the sounds produced will resemble B, D, and G, more than M, N, and ING ; a proof, that, in these two classes of consonants, the mode of interception is almost, if not altogether, the same.

With the same dispositions of the organs, and the same modes of emitting the breath, if the voice be not totally intercepted, but *strongly compressed* in its passage, there is formed a second order of consonants, called by Wallis *Apertæ* or *Open* ; and which are
indeed

indeed the aspirations of the mutes and semi-mutes. For the semi-vowels, if they could be aspirated, would, in our author's opinion, become Groans or Lowings, rather than articulate voices. And yet perhaps in some languages they may be aspirated, though they are not in ours.

Thus, if, in pronouncing P, or rather *ip*, we permit the breath to pass out with some difficulty between our lips, we form that sound of F which is heard in *off*. And, in the same manner, from B are formed V (or that sound of F which is heard in *of*) when the aperture of the lips is small and oblong; and W, when that aperture approaches to the circular form. So from T, if the breath is allowed to pass between the tongue and the teeth, we derive that sound of *tb* which is heard in the word *think*: from which if the tongue is drawn a little backwards, and the breath passes with a kind of whistling sound between it and the palate, we articulate S. And, by the same process, we change D, first, into that sound of *Tb* which is heard in *Thine*; and secondly, into Z, or that sound of the letter S, which is heard in *mans, laws, please, &c.*—These two sounds of *Tb*, which are so common in our tongue, and give us no trouble, are of most difficult acquisition to foreigners*: a proof, that simple and easy articulations

* "I have seen," says Sir David Dalrymple, "P. Wesseling, the editor of Diodorus Siculus, distort his face into convulsions,

articulations may be very laborious to those, who have not been used to them in infancy: —*adeo in teneris consuescere multum est.*

In pronouncing S, if we draw the point of the tongue a little backwards, we change the consonant into the final sound of the word *blush*; which, though we mark it in writing by two letters *Sb*, is as simple a sound as that of S.—In the same manner; namely, by drawing the point of the tongue a little backwards while we articulate Z, we form the simple sound of the French J; which, according to the analogy of our alphabet, would be expressed by the letters *Zh*. This sound in its simple form is heard in *vision*, *Asia*, *derision*, *evasion*, &c.; and makes the last part of the complex sound of the soft G, as it is heard in *gem*; which complex sound, if I mistake not, might be resolved into *dzb*.

The liquids L and R are acknowledged by Wallis to be anomalous. He is inclined to derive them from D and N. He mentions a tribe of American Indians adjoining to New England, who cannot articulate R or L; but, when they attempt either, fall into N, and instead of *lobster* say *nobsten**: and we know, that R is one of the last letters

* convulsions, while attempting to express the just sound of a Greek *Theta*." *Annals of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 5.

* I have met with two persons, natives of Scotland, who did the same.

which European infants learn to pronounce, and that they are apt to use L in its stead. From all which we may gather, that the liquids N, L, and R, bear a close affinity one with another.

If, while we articulate K, we let our breath pass with a pretty strong compression between the middle of the tongue and throat, there is formed that guttural sound, which in Scotland (where it is very common) is supposed to express the Greek X, and in the vulgar dialect of that country is annexed to the letters *gb* in the words *might*, *light*, *bright*, *figh*, &c. In the same manner, by permitting the simple sound of G, as it is heard in *go*, to escape from between the tongue and throat, in the form of an aspiration, we pronounce another guttural, not unlike the former, which in Scotland makes the final sound of the word *lough* or *loch*, which signifies a lake. These two gutturals were certainly heard in the Anglo-Saxon (or one of them at least), but have been long disused in South Britain; and an Englishman finds it difficult to pronounce them; though to Scotchmen, who are inured to them from infancy, nothing is more easy*.

The

* On second thoughts, I am in doubt, whether this account of the formation of these two gutturals be strictly accurate. To those readers, who know them and can pronounce them, it is submitted, whether they may not be better

The sound of the consonant Y (as in *year*, *yes*, &c.) is also considered by Wallis as an aspiration of the simple G, formed by a large and sudden aperture of the organs; but I am not entirely satisfied that this is the case.—In some other respects, his system may perhaps be exceptionable: but, as it is ingenious and simple, and in many particulars true, I thought a brief account of it, interspersed with additional remarks, would give an idea of the manner in which the articulations of language are formed.

And now, we may ascertain the exact number of simple elementary sounds, which are heard in the language of England. Supposing H to mark, not an articulate voice,

better explained thus. The letter C, as a substitute for K, seems in English to have two sounds, similar indeed, but not the same; the one is heard in *came*, and the other in *come*. In pronouncing the first, the point of the tongue is directed towards the teeth of the lower jaw; and, to produce the other, the tongue is drawn back a little towards the throat. From the sound of C in *came* the first mentioned guttural seems to be derived by aspiration, and the other guttural from the sound of the same letter in the word *come*. In provinces, where these gutturals are not used or known, I am afraid this account will hardly be intelligible: but a North Briton may understand it, provided he can articulate the word *came* in the English manner. And this he will do, if he give to the vowel *a* in *came* the same sound which it bears in the words *name*, *tame*, *face*, *blame*, &c.—The letter K, like its substitute C, marks two distinguishable articulations of the same nature; the one in the words *key*, *king*, *keen*, *silk*, *milk*, &c. the other in *skull*, *hock*, *cork*, *stroke*, *yoke*, &c.

D a

but

but only a breathing, (which is allowed by most grammarians to be its character) there will be found in the English tongue the following simple *consonant* sounds. 1. B, as in *ebb*. 2. D, as in *deed*. 3. F, as in *off*. 4. V, as in *of, love, velvet*. 5. G, as in *egg*. 6. K, as in *cook*. 7. L, as in *bell*. 8. M, as in *gem*. 9. N, as in *nun*. 10. P, as in *pope*. 11. R, as in *err*. 12. S, as in *ass*. 13. Z, as in *zeal, laws, as*. 14. T, as in *it*. 15. W, as in *war, twang*. 16. Y, as in *you, yes, year*. 17. ING, as in *king*. 18. SH, as in *ash*. 19. TH, as in *thumb*. 20. TH, as in *then, though, this*. 21. ZH, as in the French pronoun *je*; as in *vision, derivation, &c*; and as in the final sound of the complex consonant G, which is heard in the words *age, gem, George, and which*, as observed already, may be resolved into *dzth*.

Of our other consonants, C is superfluous in both sounds, the one being expressed by K, and the other by S; G, in the soft pronunciation, is not a simple, but a complex sound; J is unnecessary, because its sound, and that of the soft G, are in our language the same; Q, with its attendant U, is either complex, and resolvable into Kw, as in *quality*, or unnecessary, because its sound is the same with K, as in *opaque*; X is compounded of gs, as in *exact, example*, or of ks, as in *exercise, Alexander*; PH is superfluous, because F gives the same sound; and CH is
either

either compounded of *tsh* as in *church*, or simple, in which case it is superfluous, being the same with K, as in *choler*, *chyle*, *archangel*, *character*, *stomach*.

Some think, that our *Y* and *W* are always vowel sounds, and that the one might be expressed by *I*, and the other by *U*. If this be admitted, the number of our simple consonants is reduced to nineteen. But this I think is a mistake.—It is true, that *I* is sometimes pronounced like the consonant *Y*, as in the last syllable of *onion*, *opinion*, *William*; and *Y* like *I*, as at the end of a word, and when it follows a consonant, as in *liberty*, *my*, *thy*, *chyle*. It is also true, that in *persuade*, *suavity*, and some other words, the *u* has the exact sound of the *w*; and that, in the end of some diphthongal syllables, the consonant *w* is put improperly for the vowel *u*, as in *flew*, *view*, &c.—But, on the other hand, when we articulate the consonant *y*, as in *yoke*, we begin, not with a vowel sound resembling *i* or *e*, but with a springy separation of the tongue from the palate, which opens a passage to a compressed or intercepted voice, and is, in the judgment of Wallis, an aspiration of the simple *G*. And, in pronouncing *war*, we begin, in like manner, not with an open mouth, or vowel sound like *u* or *oo*, but with separating, by a wide and circular aperture, those organs which, if they had remained in close contact, would

have articulated the consonant B.—Besides, in analysing the sound of *qu*, as above, though I said, that it might be resolved into *kw*, I could not have said that it was resolvable into *ku*; for this would have implied, that *quality* (for example) was to be pronounced, not *kquality*, which is its real sound, but *kewality*.—To which may be added, that the Italians, who pronounce our vowel *u*, both when it is diphthongal, as in *mule*, *piutoslo*, and when it is simple, as in *pull*, *rumore*, *uccello*, *udire*, cannot without difficulty learn to pronounce the English consonant *w*; which is a proof, that the articulations are different.

It appears then, that in the English tongue there are twenty-one simple consonant sounds; and, according to Dr. Kenrick, there are eleven simple vowels. So that the elementary sounds of our language are thirty two; or, reckoning H an articulation, thirty three.

In other languages however there may be many others. The French U was already taken notice of. He who articulates R in the throat, and with an aspiration, utters a sound never heard in England, but which is a Celtick or Erse word, and in the highlands of Scotland denotes a *horse*; and there they call a *calf* by a name, which I can neither describe nor articulate, but which seems to begin with an aspirated L. In the Scotch dialect there are two gutturals, CH, and

and GH, which are not in English; the Welch have many peculiar articulations: and if the language of the Hurons be, as is said, wholly guttural, its elementary sounds must be very unlike those of the European tongues.

When I say, that the elementary sounds of our language are thirty two, or thirty three, I mean, not that the enumeration is absolutely exact, but that it is sufficiently so for the purpose of showing how the simple articulations of language *may* be varied; which is all that is intended in this place. I know there are other simple sounds in English, some of which perhaps have never been taken notice of by any writer on the subject. The two sounds of K and C were mentioned; and if one had time to examine this matter more minutely, one might no doubt discover other articulations that are really distinguishable, though commonly supposed to be the same.

C H A P. III.

The Alphabet imperfect, and Spelling irregular ; but neither ought to be altered :—Pronunciation cannot be the standard of Orthography.—Of teaching the Deaf to speak.—Of Diphthongs, Syllables, Words.—Of long and short words.

IN order to be perfect, the English alphabet ought, therefore, to consist of about thirty three letters ; namely, eleven vowels, and twenty two consonants : for, H, whether the symbol of a voice, or of a breathing, cannot be dispensed with, because in many words it affects the pronunciation. But it may be doubted, whether there ever was an alphabet so perfect, as to contain characters adapted to all the elementary sounds of a language, and not one more or fewer. In most alphabets, perhaps in all, there are both defects and superfluities.

Thus, in English, C, X, and Q are unnecessary ; and we have no single character to mark the simple consonant sounds usually expressed by TH, &H, and NG. Our alphabet of vowels is particularly imperfect ; three distinct sounds, or perhaps five, being signified by the first vowel letter, two or three

three by the second, two by the third, five by the fourth, and two or three by the fifth *. Hence different vowels are often used to denote one and the same sound. Thus in *cur*, *sir*, *ber*, *monk*, the same vowel sound is heard, notwithstanding the diversity of the vowel letters: and in many words, vowels are seen, and consonants too, which have no sound at all; as E in *house*, A in *realm*, the second O in *honour*, UGH in *though*, G in *gnomon*, K in *knowledge*, W in *know*, *blow*, &c. To which I may add, that some of our diphthongs are marked by single vowels, as in the words, *muse*, *mind*, *chyle*, *by*; and that we often use two vowel letters to signify a simple vowel sound, as in *head*, *blood*, *good*, &c. But these and the like imperfections are not peculiar to English, but obtain more or less in all the tongues of Europe, and probably in all written languages whatever.

Nor is there any thing wonderful in this. There are not in Great Britain two pro-

* According to Kenrick, A has five sounds, which are heard in the words *bat*, *hate*, *hard*, *what*, *ball*:—E has three, as in *me*, *met*, *ber*:—I has two, as in *thin*, *thing*:—O has five, as in *no*, *not*, *soft*, *wolf*, *monk*:—U has three, as in *pull*, *up*, *muse*; which last, however, is not a simple vowel, but a diphthongal sound.—Y in *liberty* is a vowel; in *yonder*, a consonant; and in *by*, *thy*, *my*, a diphthong. According to Johnson, A has three sounds, as in *malt*, *father*, *place*: E has two, as in *me*, *met*: I, two, as above: O, two, as in *got*, *draw*: and U, three, as above.

vinces, which do not differ in some particulars of pronunciation; and in most countries the modes of speech, especially while literature is in its infancy, are vague and changeable. Hence, when men begin to write their mother tongue, it may be supposed, that they will differ greatly in their spelling, and in their notions of the powers of the letters: and he, who is in other respects the most popular, will probably give the law in these particulars, however injudicious his spelling may be, and however inelegant his pronunciation. Then, a laudable regard to old authors, and to etymology, and a desire to fix the language, will determine succeeding writers to retain the old spelling, even when the pronunciation has become different. Thus, the final E in *bouse*, *borse*, &c. which was certainly pronounced in the age of Chaucer, and not wholly disused in that of Wallis, we still retain in writing, though it has been mute for more than a century. Nor have we laid aside the GH in the words, *light*, *bright*, *figh*, *though*, &c. (which was also pronounced in the antient language) notwithstanding that the guttural is now no more articulated in any part of the British empire, except Scotland. And, in the opinion of our best grammarians, the words *bonour*, *autbour*, *orateur*, &c. ought not to lose the *u* they have been so long possessed of, because they came to us, not from the Latin *bonor*,

bonor, auſtor, orator, but from the French *boneur, auteur, orateur*.

Every thing deſerves praiſe, which is done with a view to make language durable; for on the permanency of any tongue depends that of the literature conveyed in it. And if new words, new letters, or new modes of ſpelling, might be introduced at pleaſure, language would ſoon be diſfigured and altered; the old authors would ere long be laid aſide as unintelligible, and the new would be conſigned to oblivion before their time. Yet ſeveral attempts were made in the laſt century, to alter the ſpelling, and even the alphabet, of the Engliſh tongue. Sir Thomas Smith, Dr. Gill, and Charles Butler, thought it abſurd to ſpeak one way, and write another; and ſeem to have founded their reſpective plans of improvement upon this principle, that pronunciation ought to determine orthography: not conſidering that, as Dr. Johnson well obſerves, “this is to
“meaſure by a ſhadow, and take that for a
“model or ſtandard, which is changing
“while they apply it.” For, according to this rule, pronunciation ought to be uniform throughout the kingdom; which, however deſirable, and however eaſy it may have appeared to ſome projectors, is, I fear, impracticable; and the alphabet, or the mode of ſpelling, muſt vary continually as the pronunciation varies; which would be a matter
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of such nicety, as no degree of human wisdom could regulate. Besides, reformatations of this kind, supposed practicable, would obliterate etymology, and, with that, the remembrance of many old customs and sentiments, would take away from the significance of many important words, and involve in confusion both our grammar and our policy.

Let the language, therefore, be fixed, as much as possible, in the phraseology, spelling, and alphabet; even though in all the three respects it might have been better than it is. A change in any of them would be dangerous, and produce no other good effect, than that of making *the language now spoken* more easy to foreigners: for to them, as well as to natives, it would increase the difficulty of studying our literature in its full extent.—It may be said, indeed, that all our good authors might be transcribed or translated into the fashionable letters and syllables. But this could not be. We have no criterion, universally acknowledged, for distinguishing good authors from bad: we have no laws to warrant the annihilation of property in books and manuscripts; nor is it in the power of lawgivers, far less of philosophers, to make a whole people renounce the written language of their fathers, wherein they find no inconvenience, and which is their only security for a great part of their wealth,

wealth, and adopt in its stead a system of cyphers and syllables, which they understand not, and of the utility of which they have had no experience *. In a word, our language is the basis of British learning, as our laws are of the British government: if we value the superstructure, let us venerate the foundation, to which, if it is not composed of unsound materials, length of time will give more and more stability.

By attending to those motions of the articulating organs, whereby the elementary sounds of language are formed, ingenious men have contrived the art of teaching the deaf to speak.

In order to this, the pupils are first taught to utter vocal sound, and to know when they utter it: which, as an eminent professor of the art informed me, is one of the most difficult parts of the whole procedure. For, as the scholar never heard any sound, it must be long before he is made to know what his master means when he desires him to exert his voice; and still longer, before he can either do what is desired, or know when, or how, he does it. Internal feel-

* The emperor Claudius, who though destitute of parts was not without ambition, aspired to the honour of introducing three new letters into the Roman alphabet. They were in use during his reign; but, as the historian expresses it, were soon after *obliterated*.—*Quæ usui imperitante eo, mox oblitteratæ, &c.* Tacit. Annal. lib. xi.

ing, and external touch, must therefore supply the want of hearing. The voice is accompanied with certain perceptible tremors and tensions of the organs in the mouth and throat: and when the scholar has long been made to attend to these, he comes at last to perceive, by the *tangible* effects of vocal sound, *when* he utters it, and *how*.

The next point is, to instruct him in articulation. So far as this is performed by *visible* contacts or applications of the organs, it is not difficult to conceive, by what steps he may be led to it. But many articulations depend upon the throat, the inner part of the nose, and other organs that in speaking are not visible. In regard to these, the pupils must receive information by touch. The master articulates a certain sound, and desires them to feel the tremors occasioned by it in his nose, and the adjoining parts; and then, after laying their hands on the same part of their faces, to utter a variety of sounds, by way of trial, till they come to utter that, which produces the same tremors in their own mouth and nostrils; giving them, at the same time, directions for the management of their tongue and lips; and illustrating the nature of the sound they are in quest of, by that of some other kindred sound wherewith they are already acquainted. And thus, after long time and much labour, they may be taught to articulate most of the
sounds

sounds that are annexed to the several letters of the alphabet; and to join articulations together, so as to form syllables and words.

But this is not enough. They must also learn to distinguish the vocal sounds that are uttered by the person who speaks to them. This they cannot do by hearing, for they are deaf; nor by touch, for it would be unseemly, if they were to handle the nose, cheeks, and lips, of the speaker: it must therefore be done by sight. The speaker pronounces very slow, making a short pause at the end of each word, and gives a stronger energy than usual to the operation of every muscle that separates or brings together his organs: and the dumb man, looking him steadily in the face, which is exposed to the light, guesses at his words from the visible agitation of the several parts of his countenance.

It is obvious, that the acquisition of this talent must be extremely difficult, the exercise of it most laborious, and the words distinguishable by it very few. Nor is it possible, perhaps, for a dumb man ever to acquire such a readiness in it as shall give more pleasure than pain to his company, or be of any real benefit to himself. The time, therefore, that is employed by those unfortunate persons in this study, might, in my opinion, be more advantageously laid out, in acquiring the art of drawing, and the knowledge
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of written language, whereof they are very capable, together with the ready use of a convenient system of visible signs, or symbols, for the communication of thought.

It may to some appear strange at first hearing, that in the whole English tongue there should be no more than thirty two simple elementary sounds. But they, who know any thing of the powers of combined numbers, or who have considered in how many ways our elementary articulations may be formed into syllables and words, will not be surprised when they are told, that of these thirty two sounds hundreds of languages might be composed, equally copious with the English, and all different from one another.

One of the simplest combinations in language is the Diphthong: which is formed, when two contiguous vowel sounds coalesce in such a manner, as that, though they form but one syllable, the sound of both, or at least a double sound, is distinctly heard; as *oy* in *joy*, *ow* in *cow*, *ui* in *juice*. A diphthong is sometimes marked by three letters, as *eau* in *beauty*, *ieu* in *lieu*; and sometimes by one vowel letter, as *u* in *muse*, *i* in *mind*, *y* in *style*: but it derives its name, and nature, from its sound, and not from its letters: for the word *diphthong* denotes a double vowel sound; and whatever marks the coalition of two distinct vowel sounds, whether it be two letters, or three,

three, or one, is really the mark of a diphthong. And when a monophthong, or simple vowel sound, is marked by two vowel letters, as *oo* in *good*, *ea* in *bread*; or by three, as *eau* in *beau*; the combination is not a diphthong, though it may be called a double or treble vowel.

Grammarians, indeed, speak of triphthongs, or three monophthongal sounds coalescing in one syllable; and give *eye* and *beau* as examples. But, notwithstanding the number of the letters, *eye* is as much a diphthong as *i* in *mind*, or as our affirmative particle *ay*, (though in pronouncing the latter a peculiar stress is laid upon the sound of the first vowel); and *eau* in *beau* is as truly a monophthong, as the interjection *O*.—Some triphthongs, however, there are in English, though but few; and those, I think, are marked by a single vowel letter. Such are the sounds annexed to the vowels in the words *sky* and *kind*: in which, the diphthong expressed by *y* in the one, and *i* in the other, is apparently introduced, in pronunciation, with something of the sound of the English *e* as heard in the words *be*, *she*, *be*.

And here I must take notice of a slight inaccuracy, which many Grammarians both Latin and English have fallen into. The former tell us, and indeed with truth, that *æ* and *œ* are diphthongs, and yet in speaking Latin make them simple vowel sounds: and

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the latter refer to the class of diphthongs *oo* in *good*, *ea* in *head, bread, realm*, and *ai* in *vain, plain, &c*; though the pronunciation of these is as truly monophthongal, or simple, as that of *u* in *pull*; *e* in *bed, bred, helm*; and *a* in *plane, vane*. In this particular, therefore, the Latin grammarian ought to reform his pronunciation; and the English, his account of the diphthong. For, that the Romans pronounced *æ* and *œ* as double vowel sounds; the first similar to our affirmative particle *ay*, and the last not unlike *oi* in *voice*, cannot, I think, be doubted. The first is sometimes resolved, by their best versifiers Lucretius and Virgil, into two syllables, *materiæ* into *materiali*, *aulæ* into *aulai*, *auræ* into *aurai*; which I presume would not have been done, if the sound had been, as we make it, perfectly monophthongal. Nor, if they had pronounced *Cæsar*, as we do, *Cesar* or *Kesar*, is it to be imagined that the Greeks would have expressed the vowel sound of the first syllable of that name by two vowel letters *Kaisar*. Nor would the Romans have transformed the Greek * *poine* into *pana*, or † *Philopoinen* into *Philopamen*, if they had not pronounced *æ* as a diphthong. But this by the by.

Consonants, by being joined to consonants, produce many combinations of articulate sound; and simple vowels, and diph-

* *nunc.*† *Philopainen.*

thongs,

thongs, may be joined to single, or double, or treble consonants; and thus an endless variety of syllables may be formed: and a syllable may be joined to other syllables, or stand by itself, so as to form short or long words; and each vowel sound may be long, or short, and vary the import of the syllable accordingly. So that, though the number of elementary sounds is not great in any language, the variety of *possible* words, that may be formed by combining them, is in every language so great, as almost to exceed computation, and much more than sufficient to express all the varieties of human thought. But the *real* words, even of the most copious language, may without difficulty be numbered; for a good dictionary comprehends them all. In the English tongue, after deducting proper names, and the inflections of our verbs and nouns, I have reason to think, that they do not exceed forty thousand.

We must not, however, estimate the number of our ideas by that of our words; the former being beyond comparison more diversified than the latter. Many thoughts we express, not by particular terms appropriated to each, but by a periphrasis, or combination of terms, which under different forms of arrangement and connection may be applied to a great variety of different purposes; and many thoughts are communicated in tropes

and figures; and many may sometimes be signified by one and the same word. There are few terms in language that have not more than one meaning; some have several, and some a great number. In how many different ways, and to how many different purposes, may the verbs *do*, *lie*, *lay*, and *take*, (for example) be applied! Johnson's Dictionary will show this, and much more of the same kind; and leave the reader equally astonished at the acuteness of the lexicographer, and at the complex nature and use of certain minute parts of human speech. Even of our prepositions (as will be observed hereafter) one has upwards of twelve, one more than twenty, and one no fewer than thirty different meanings. And yet, when we understand a language, we are not sensible of any perplexity arising from these circumstances: all ambiguities of sense being, in a correct style, prevented by what Horace calls *Callida junctura*, that is, by a right arrangement of the words, and other artifices of composition.

The quantity of distinct speech that we pronounce with one effort of the articulating organs is called a *syllable*. In every syllable there must be one vowel sound at least; because without an opening of the mouth there can be no distinct articulation. A syllable may be a single vowel, as *a*, *e*; or a single diphthong, as *ay*, *oi*; or either of these modified

fied by one or more consonants, placed before it, or after it, or on both sides of it:—as *to*, of; *boy*, *oyl*; *dog*, *foil*; *dry*, *art*; *swift*, *brails*, *strength*.

Language is made up of words; and words are the smallest divisions of speech that have signification. Syllables, as such, have no meaning; for a significant syllable is a word. Every word means something, either of itself, or as joined to other words; and words derive their meaning from the consent and practice of those who use them.

If one were to contrive a new language, one might make any articulate sound the sign of any idea: there would be no impropriety in calling oxen *men*, or rational beings by the name of *oxen*. But where a language is already formed, they who speak it must use words in the customary sense. By doing otherwise, they incur the charge, either of affectation, if they mean only to be remarkable, or of falsehood, if they mean to deceive. To speak as others speak, is one of those tacit obligations, annexed to the condition of living in society, which we are bound in conscience to fulfil, though we have never ratified them by any express promise; because, if they were disregarded, society would be impossible, and human happiness at an end. It is true, that, in a book of science founded on definition, words may be used in any sense, provided their meaning be explained: in this

case there is no falsehood, because there is no intention to deceive : but, even in this case, if the common analogies of language were violated, the author would be justly blamed for giving unnecessary trouble to his readers, and for endeavouring capriciously to abrogate a custom, which universal use had rendered more respectable, as well as more convenient, than any other that he could substitute in its room.

A word may be a single syllable ; or it may consist of two, or of several syllables. Hence, in respect of length, as well as of sound, words admit of great variety.

Some have said, that the words of barbarous nations are very long ; and that, as most nations have at one time or other been barbarous, most primitive tongues in their uncultivated state are remarkable for the extraordinary length of their words ; but that, by refinement, and practice in speaking and writing, these come in time to be abridged, and made more manageable. And it cannot be denied, that into common discourse abbreviations of words are gradually introduced, which were not at first in the language.— But we find, that the radical words of antient tongues are rather short than long. This is true of the Hebrew, and is said to be true of the Chinese. In the Greek and Latin, though some inflections of compound verbs shoot out to a great length, the primitive verbs, nouns, pronouns,

pronouns, and the most essential particles, are comparatively short. Of the English too it has been observed, that its fundamental words of Saxon original are most of them monosyllables. And though some words of inconvenient magnitude may be found in every tongue, as *notwithstanding* and *nevertheless* in English, *verum enimvero* in Latin, and *conciosiacosache* in Italian, (which by the by are made up of short words joined together) yet it does not appear, that words are always improved by being shortened. On the contrary, our English abbreviations *dont*, *cant*, *shant*, &c. though they have long been used in conversation, are to this day intolerable in solemn style.

Travellers, indeed, inform us of certain words of monstrous length, that are current in savage nations; that, for example, in the dialect of the Esquimaux, *wonna-weuck-tuck-luit* signifies *much*; and that, on the banks of the river Orellana in South America, the number *three* is denoted by a word of twenty letters, *poetazzarorincouroac*. But is it certain, that those travellers did not hear a sentence, a circumlocution, or a description, when they imagined they were hearing a single word?—*A very great quantity* is a phrase of the same import with *much*; and *the third part of the number nine* is a periphrasis for *three*. Suppose a foreigner, passionately fond of the marvellous, and who had formed a theory

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concerning long words, and was determined to find them among us as well as in South America, should, after a week's residence in London, take it in his head that the English express *three* by a word of twenty-seven letters, and *much* by another of eighteen: would not such a mistake be natural enough in such a person?—It is, I think, very improbable, that long words should abound among barbarians. For short ones are more obvious, and less troublesome, and are withal capable of sufficient variety. And we cannot imagine, that they, whose garments are but a rag, and whose lodgings a hole, should affect superfluities in their language.

Long words are said to give dignity to language, and short ones to be detrimental to harmony. And there is truth in the remark; but it must not be admitted without limitation. Many long ones render language heavy and unwieldy: and short ones are not harsh, unless where, by beginning or ending with hard consonants, they refuse to coalesce with the letters that go before or follow. For, in pronunciation, the voice does not make a pause at the end of every word; and when two or three little words run easily into one another, the effect in point of harmony is the same, as if one word of several syllables were spoken, instead of several words of one syllable. And therefore English lines of monosyllables, though some critics condemn them,

them in poetry as dissonant, *may* flow as easily and sweetly as any other : as,

I live in hope, that all will yet be well.—

Arms and the man I sing, who forced by fate.—

And I know not whether there be in the whole language a smoother paragraph than the following ; in which, of eighty two words sixty nine are monosyllables.—“ My beloved spake,
“ and said unto me, Rise up my Love, my
“ fair one, and come away : For lo, the
“ winter is past, the rain is over and gone ;
“ the flowers appear on the earth, the time
“ of the singing of birds is come, and the
“ voice of the turtle is heard in our land :
“ The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs,
“ and the vines with the tender grape give a
“ good smell : Arise, my Love, my fair one,
“ and come away.”

The truth is, that a mixture of shorter with longer words may be necessary to harmony ; but, in our language, a better sound is heard from many short words of Saxon original, if their initial and final articulations admit of an easy coalescence, than from a redundancy of long words derived from the Greek and Latin. For in English, though there is much Latin, and some Greek, yet the Saxon predominates ; and its sounds are most acceptable to a British ear, because most familiar. And hence, with all its ease and apparent carelessness, the prose of Dryden is incomparably more melodious, than that of the
learned

learned and elaborate Sir Thomas Brown. For the former adheres, where he can, to plain words of English or Saxon growth; while the other is continually dragging in gigantick terms of Greek or Latin etymology †.

If a language were to be invented, and words lengthened and shortened upon principles of philosophy, there can be no doubt, that such as either have little meaning of their own, as articles, conjunctions, and prepositions, or continually recur in speaking and writing, as auxiliary verbs and personal pronouns, ought to be short; and that other words, of more important meaning, or less necessary use, may admit of a more complex articulation *. And in fact, though languages are formed gradually; and though their formation, depending upon causes too minute to be perceived, is said to be accidental, or by chance; yet we find, that this principle has influence in most nations. Personal pronouns, articles, and auxiliary words, are commonly short; and though some conjunctions are of unwieldy magnitude, the most necessary ones are manageable enough.

† Such as *commensality, decorticated, dissentaneus, diaphanity, ablatate, Sientoraphonick*,—and I know not how many others.

* See Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetorick*. Book iii. chap. 4.

C H A P. IV.

Of Emphasis, 1. Rhetorical. 2. Syllabick, which is either Long-vowelled, or Short-vowelled.—Of the Numbers or measures of English Poetry, as depending on Emphasis; their nature, and varieties.

WORDS alone do not constitute speech. To all the languages we know, and probably to all others, belong *Emphasis* and *Accent*; whose nature and use may be explained as follows.

EMPHASIS, which is a stronger exertion of the voice upon some words and syllables than upon others, is necessary, to give spirit and propriety to pronunciation, by marking, first, the most important words in a sentence; and, secondly, those syllables in a word, which custom may have distinguished by a more forcible utterance.

First: to show the necessity of pronouncing some words of a sentence with a stronger emphasis than others, let us make a trial upon the several parts of this brief interrogatory, Do you walk to town to-day? * — and we shall find, that every variation of the em-

* See the Preceptor, vol. i. page 43. Introduction.

phasis

phasis gives a different meaning to the question, and requires a different answer. If we exert our voice upon the pronoun, and say, "Do *you* walk to town to-day?" the answer might be, "No, but my servant does." If it be said, "Do you *walk* to town to-day?"—it may be answered, "No, I shall *ride*." Let the question be, "Do you *walk to town* to-day?"—the answer, if negative, may be, "No, I shall go down *into the country*." Lastly, if we were asked, "Do you walk to town *to-day*?"—we should perhaps answer, "No, but I shall *to-morrow*." Again, let the emphasis be twice applied, "Do you *walk to town to-day*?"—and an answer containing a double emphasis may perhaps be requisite; "No, *to-morrow* I shall *ride* thither." And if the same words were addressed to us without any emphasis on the part of the speaker, we should be at a loss what to answer, because his meaning would appear ambiguous.

One of the greatest niceties in the art of reading is the right application of the emphasis. And of this they only are capable, who perfectly understand what they read, and attend to the full import of every clause, and of every word. If we read without understanding, or without attention, we continually misapply the emphasis; and the hearer, if he is not very acute, must often mistake the sense. And therefore I am surprised,

prised, that Milton did not contrive a better expedient for supplying his loss of sight, than that of making his daughters read to him in Latin, Italian, Greek, and Hebrew; languages, whereof he had not taught them to know any thing but the letters. A hearer of ordinary talents could not put up with a reader who affixes no idea to what he articulates. Such readers must either puzzle, when they do not apply emphasis, or mislead, when they misapply it. But Milton's memory and learning were almost as wonderful as his genius: and, after he grew blind, it is not likely, that he would desire to hear any foreign books read to him, but such as he was well acquainted with.

Children are not often taught to read with the proper emphasis. Indeed, when books are put before them which they do not understand, it is impossible they should. Let them, therefore, read nothing but what is level to their capacity; let them read slowly, and with attention to the meaning of every word; and let them be not only set right when they misapply the emphasis, but also cautioned against the opposite extremes of too forcible and too feeble an application of it; for by the former of these faults they become affected in their utterance, and by the latter insipid. I may add, that the pronunciation ought not to be equally emphatical on all subjects. If we rehearse the words
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of sorrow, humility, or love, a soft emphasis, being the most natural, is the most graceful and expressive; but a more vigorous energy should enforce the language of indignation, contempt, or earnest remonstrance. Moderation, however, is necessary in this as in other things. For when articulation becomes strictly imitative, it is called theatrical, and gives offence in domestick life, because inconsistent with that modesty, which forms an essential part of true politeness.—Of the bad effects of theatrical imitation in the pulpit, I have spoken in another place *.

Hitherto we have considered emphasis as affecting the pronunciation of *words*; and this may be called the *rhetorical emphasis*. I now remark, in the second place, that there are also *emphatick syllables*. In most words of more than one syllable, the voice is more vigorously exerted, and dwells longer, upon some of the component sounds, than upon others; as upon the first of *blameless*, the second of *revenge*, and the third of *magazine*.—Moreover, the first and third syllables of the word *melanchely* are pronounced more strongly, though not more slowly, than the second and fourth: and of the word *dissipation* the first syllable has a forcible and quick utterance, and the third is forcible and slow.

For, in our tongue, there are two sorts of syllabick emphasis. The one, terminating

* Essay on Memory, chap. 3.

in a consonant, is formed by a stronger or smarter exertion of the voice: the other, which frequently ends in a vowel or diphthong, is distinguished by a longer continuance, as well as by a powerful energy. Thus the first syllable of *studious* and of *nation* is emphatical and long; but the first syllable of *study*, and of *passion*, though emphatical, is not long.

This, however obvious, has not always been attended to. In most English Dictionaries, prior to that of Dr. Kenrick, the emphatick syllable has the same mark, whether it be long or short: nay, some grammarians have told us, that the emphatick syllable in English is always long. But he, who compares the first syllable of *nation* with the first syllable of *passion*, will observe, that, though both are emphatical, the former is long and ends in a vowel sound, and that the latter is short or quick, and ends in the consonant S.—It is true, that the long emphatick syllable often ends in a consonant sound, as in *severe*, *redeem*, *divine*, *benign*; but in this case, it is still the vowel or diphthong that is lengthened.—It is also true, that the other syllabick emphasis is sometimes long, as in *event*, *neglect*; but here the vowel is obviously short, and the protracted sound rests upon the consonants, and is owing to their duplicity, which forms a collision of the articulating organs, and a necessary delay in
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the pronunciation. Syllables of this latter fort are by the Latin grammarians said to be *long by position*.

Emphatick syllables are by some called *accented*; which is improper; *accent* being a thing totally different, as will appear hereafter. And therefore, on account of their reference to accent or tone, the epithets *acute* and *grave*, whereby one author distinguishes the two sorts of syllabick emphasis, must be rejected.

If it be asked, in what respects they are necessary or useful in language; I answer, first, that, by their means, one and the same word may be applied without inconvenience to different purposes: which, though not very material perhaps, is however of some benefit. Thus *ref-use* is a noun, and *re-fuse* a verb; and the same distinction holds in *subject* and *subjeēt*, *insult* and *insūlt*, *convirt* and *cōvōrt*, and many others.

But secondly, Emphatick syllables are still more useful, as on them depends, in a great measure, at least in the modern tongues, and particularly in English, those varieties in the sound and motion of contiguous syllables, which give rise to rhythm * and poetical harmony.

* Rhythm is that peculiar movement, of the notes in music, and of the syllables in poetry, which may be imitated by the drum, or by the fingers striking on a board. There is rhythm even in prose: as the continuities and

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mony. Nay, whether it be owing to the very act of breathing, or to habits we have contracted in the use of our mother tongue, we find it almost impossible to pronounce a number of significant syllables, without giving more emphasis to some than to others. Pronunciation without emphasis, or the voice applied with equal force upon every syllable, would sound very uncouth to our ear, and seem to resemble articulations produced by mechanism, rather than the speech of an intelligent being. Without emphasis even musick would be insipid and inexpressive.

The Greeks and Romans were determined, in the formation of their poetical measures, by the *quantity*, that is, by the proportion of time, in which their syllables were pronounced. In this respect, they divided them into long and short. A short and a long syllable made what they called the Iambick foot; and six Iambick feet, or a short and a long syllable six times repeated, formed their Iambick Trimeter, whereof the following line of Horace, when rightly pronounced according to the *quantity*, is an example,

Bēātūs illē qūī prēcūl nēgōtīīs.

Two long syllables made the foot Spondeus, and a long and two short the Dactyl: and

intermissions of the voice in speaking, and the variations arising from long and short, or from emphatick and non-emphatick, syllables, may all be imitated in the same manner. Of the effects of rhythm in musick, see an *Essay on Poetry and Musick*. Part i. chap. 6. sect. 2. § 4.

the verse called Hexameter consisted of six feet, whereof any one of the first four might be either a Dactyl or a Spondee, the fifth was a dactyl, and a spondee the last. And thus, the iambick foot comprehending the time of three short syllables, and the hexameter feet being each of them equal to four short, or two long; it appears that the divisions of the former were (to adopt a term of modern musick) in *treble time*, and those of the latter in *common time*.

But on what does the measure of English verse depend?—Some have said, on the number of syllables. But that is a mistake.—The three following lines are of the same iambick species; and yet, the first consists of ten, the second of nine, and the third of eight, syllables:

And many a youth, and many a maid
Were dancing in the neighbouring shade,
In holiday attire array'd.

Of these four lines the first and third have eight syllables, and the second and fourth have nine; yet the measure is the same throughout;

Yet do not my folly reprove;
She was fair, and my passion begun,
She smiled, and I could not but love;
She is faithless, and I am undone.

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The four that follow might all stand in the same verse of the same song, and be sung to the same tune, though in the first there are eleven syllables, in the second twelve, thirteen in the third, and fourteen in the last.

And when I am gone, may the better sort say,
He had sense, he was modest, and harmlessly gay,
And a kind, unaffected, and good honest fellow,
In the morning when sober, in the evening when
mellow.

Our heroick verse, too, may consist of ten syllables (which is the simplest and most common form of it), or of eleven, or of twelve : as,

Arms and the man I sing, who forced by fate.—
Bellowing along the plains the monster ran.—
Many a wide lawn, and many a waving grove.—

The following has been given, as a heroick line of fourteen syllables,

And many an humourous, many an amorous lay.

And, admitting a supernumerary syllable, the second line of this couplet might be tolerated, though it has fifteen :

The hapless poet pen'd, alas ! for pity,
Full many an amorous, many a querulous ditty.

It has indeed been thought by some critics, that in our heroick verse, when the syllables exceed ten in number, there must be redundant vowels, which in reading are

suppressed or cut off, and in which, in printed books, the apostrophe is often inserted. But, whatever be the case in printing, and writing, this is contrary to the practice of all good readers; they pronounce every syllable distinctly, and by so doing gratify our ear much more than if they had made the supposed elisions. For, how ridiculous would it be, if one were to read the last line thus!

Full man' an am'rous, man' a quer'lous ditty.

This might indeed be called measure, but it could not be called English.

Some have imagined, that the rhythm of our verse depends, like that of the Greek and Latin, not upon the number, but upon the *quantity*, of syllables. And it is true, that an English heroick line may be made up of a short and long syllable five times repeated; in which case we may say, without any impropriety, that it is a pure lambick of five feet: as,

Dēspair, rēvēnge, rēmōrse tōrmēt thē sōl.

But it is no less true, that an English heroick line *may* be composed, wherein there shall not be one long syllable, except the last: as,

The busy bodies flutter tattle still.

Whatever may be said of this line in other respects, it will at least be allowed to be of the English heroick species: and yet, if we
were

were to pronounce the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth syllables as if they were long, the articulation would be ridiculous :

The buzz-y bode-ies flutt-er tatt-le still.

I grant, that those heroick lines, which abound in syllables that are at once emphatical and short, are not so proper for expressing sentiments or images of dignity : yet still they are of the heroick species ; and no critick will say, that they are inconsistent with rule, or not justifiable by authority.

On what then does the measure of English verses depend ? Not on the *number* of the syllables, as we have seen : nor on their *quantity* ; since an English heroick line may consist of five short and five long syllables, or of nine short and one long syllable.—In fact, this matter is regulated by the *emphasis*. In our verse, there must be in every foot one emphatick syllable whether long or short. And the alternate succession of emphatick and non-emphatick syllables is as essential to English numbers, as that of long and short is to the Latin and Greek.—Thus in that line,

The busy bodies flatter tattle still,

though there is not one long syllable till you come to the end, there are five emphatick syllables, each of them preceded by a syllable of no emphasis. And in the other line,

Despair, remorse, revenge, torment the soul,

there are also five emphatick syllables, each preceded by a non-emphatick syllable.

In what respect, then, do these two lines (which are allowed to be of the same species) resemble each other, and in what respect do they differ? They differ in this respect, that one is made up of short and long syllables alternately disposed, while the other has in it only one long syllable: They agree in this, that both the one and the other is composed of non-emphatick and emphatick syllables placed alternately. It follows, that, though long and short, or short and long, syllables *may sometimes* form the rhythm of English verse, yet that which *invariably* and *essentially* forms it, is the interchange of emphatick and non-emphatick syllables.

In lines, that are intended to imitate the sense by the articulation, or to be remarkably concise and significant, an exuberance of emphatick syllables may sometimes be found. But such lines, whatever merit they may have in respect of energy, are not well-tuned; and perhaps could hardly be known to be verse, if we did not find them among other verses. The imperfection of their harmony, however, we overlook, if they have any other beauty to counterbalance it. Such is this of Milton:

Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades
of death.

And

And such is that, in a late Prologue, which I have heard Mrs Abingdon pronounce very humourously :

Some great fat wife of some great fat shopkeeper.

Our language abounds in words of one syllable, many of which, being of ambiguous quantity, have no other emphasis, but the rhetorical, which is fixed upon them by the sense. In lines of monosyllables, therefore, that are well-tuned, those words which, by the rule of the verse would have the syllabick emphasis, have also the rhetorical emphasis from the importance of their signification. If we were to mistake the following line for prose,—

The sun was set, and all the plains were still,
yet, if we read it with understanding, the rhetorical emphasis, coinciding with the syllabick, and having indeed the same effect, would prove it to be poetical, and of the heroick species.

I shall conclude this part of the subject with two remarks. The first is, that though our poetry derives its measure from the emphasis of syllables, and the Greek and Latin theirs from the quantity, we must not look upon the former as barbarous, and upon the latter as alone susceptible of true harmony : the only inference we can reasonably make is, that Greek and Latin verses are more uniform than ours in respect of time.

The rhythm of sounds may be marked by the distinction of loud and soft, as well as by that of long and short. Every nation has a right to determine for itself in these matters; and it is probable, that the English numbers are as delightful to us, as the Latin and Greek were to the Romans and Grecians. In like manner, though rhimes are intolerable in antient poetry, it does not follow that they are contemptible in themselves: most modern nations have them, and children and peasants are charmed with them; which could not be, if they had not in certain circumstances the power of pleasing.

My second remark is, that though those terms in antient grammar, *trochæus*, *iambus*, *dactylus*, *anapæstus*, *spendens*, &c. do properly signify certain limited arrangements of long and short syllables, it can do no harm to adopt them in English prosody. For our emphatick syllables are often long, and our non-emphatick syllables are often short; and where this is the case, we use these terms without impropriety. And where this is not the case, if we call that foot a *trochee* (for example) which consists of an emphatick and non-emphatick syllable, both of them short, as *body*, we do not depart from the original meaning of words more than is frequently done, without blame, on other occasions.

In fact, the customs of different countries are so different, that when we borrow words
from

from a foreign tongue, it is not always possible to confine them to their primitive sense. With us, an *advocate* is one who pleads a cause in a court of judicature. An advocate in antient Rome was one, who assisted with his countenance and advice the person who was obliged to appear before the judges, whether he spoke in his behalf or not.

Let us then have our trochees, iambuses, and anapests, and our trochaick, iambick, and anapestick measures: only let it be remembered, that, in English prosody, a trochee is either a long and short, (as *lowly*), or an emphatick and non-emphatick, syllable, (as *body*); an iambus, the reverse, as *renown*, *repel*; an anapest, an iambus preceded by a short syllable, as *magazine*; and a dactyl, a trochee followed by a short syllable, as *thunderer*, *profligate*.

As our poetical numbers depend upon the alternate succession of emphatick and non-emphatick syllables, it may be proper, before I proceed to the subject of *accent*, to give some account of the various sorts of measure, that have been established in English poetry; in describing which, I must be understood to use the words trochee, iambus, dactyl, and anapest, in the sense just now explained. And I shall take the liberty to mark our *rhythmical emphasis*, and the *want of it*, by the same characters, which
in

in Latin prosody denote *long* and *short* syllables.

English poetical measure may be divided into four kinds, Dactylic, Iambick, Trochaick, and Anapestick.

I. The Dactylic measure being very uncommon, I shall give only one example of one species of it, which I find in Dryden's *Albion and Albanus*.

Frōm thē lōw pālāce ōf ōld fāthēr Ōcēān
Come we in pity your cares to deplore ;
Sea-racing dolphins are train'd for our motion,
Moony tides swelling to roll us ashore.

II. The Iambick is of all measures the most natural ; for, as Aristotle observes, we often fall into it in our ordinary discourse. Greek and Latin hexameters, and our own trochaick and anapestick numbers, are more artificial, because more unlike the cadences of conversation. Our Iambicks we may subdivide into species, according to the number of feet or syllables whereof they consist ; and I shall follow the same rule of arrangement in describing the other measures.

1. The shortest form of the English Iambick consists of an iambus with an additional short syllable ; as

Disdaining,
 Complaining,
 Consenting,
 Repenting.

We have no poem of this measure, but it may be met with in stanzas. The example is taken from a song in the mask of Comus.

2. The second form of our Iambick is also too short to be continued through any great number of lines; though in the following example it has a very good effect. It consists of two iambuses.

With rāvīsh'd ēars
 The monarch hears,
 Ass-umes the God,
 Af-fects to nod.

It sometimes takes, or may take, an additional short syllable; as,

Ūpōn ā mōūntāin
 Beside a fountain.

3. The third form consists of three iambuses:

Nō wār, ōr bāttle's sōūnd,
 Was heard the world a-round.

with sometimes an additional short syllable;
 as,

Yē lāys nō lōngēr lāngūish,
 For nought can cure my anguish.

4. The

4. The fourth form is made up of four iambuses, with sometimes an additional syllable, which gives a pleasing variety.

Or whēthēr, ās sōme sāgēs sīng,
The frolick wind, that breathes the spring,
Young Zephyr with Aurora playing, &c.

This measure, which we use both in burlesque and in serious poetry, is the same with the Iambick Dimeter of the antients; whereof, in its purest form, this is an example:

Īnārſīt āēstūōſiūs.

5. The fifth species of English Iambick is no other than our common measure for heroic poetry and tragedy. In its purest, or simplest, form it consists of five iambuses:

Thē dūmb shāll sīng, thē lāme hīs crutch fōregō.

but, by the admission of other feet, as trochees, dactyls, and anapests, is capable of more than thirty varieties. Indeed, most of our common measures may be varied in the same way, as well as by the different position of their pauses. And such varieties, when skilfully introduced, give wonderful energy to English, Greek, and Latin numbers; and have, for this reason, been studiously sought after by Homer, Virgil, Milton, Dryden, and all other harmonious poets: variety being the soul of harmony, and nothing in language or in musick more tiresome to the ear than

than an uniform sameness of sound and measure.—Our heroick verse is sometimes lengthened out by an additional short syllable, and then becomes nearly the same with that of the modern Italians.

'Tis heaven itself that points out an hereafter.—

Che 'l gran sepolchro liberò di Christo.

But in English, this is more common in blank verse, than in rhyme; and in tragedy, than in the epick or didactick poem; and among tragedians it is less fashionable now, than it was formerly.

6. The sixth form of our Iambick is commonly called the Alexandrine measure; because, say the criticks, (but on what authority I know not) it was first used in a poem called Alexander. It consists of six iambuses.

För thōū ärt büt öf düst; bē hūmblē, änd bē wise.

It is introduced sometimes in heroick rhyme; and, when sparingly, and with judgment, occasions an agreeable variety.

Waller was smooth; but Dryden taught to join

The varying verse, the full resounding line,

The long majestick march, and energy divine.

Spenser makes it the last line of his great stanza; where indeed it has a very happy effect. By the same artifice, Milton gives superlative elevation to some of his stanzas on the Nativity;

But

But first to those ychain'd in sleep [the deep.
The wakeful trump of doom shall thunder through
and Gray, to the endings of his Pindarick
measures. This verse is generally pleasing,
when it concludes a poetical sentence of dig-
nity: as where the aged champion in Dry-
den's Virgil resigns his arms, with a resolu-
tion not to resume them any more:

Take the last gift these wither'd arms can yield,
Thy gauntlets I resign, and here renounce the field.

In measure and number of feet it is the
same with the pure Iambick trimeter of the
Greeks and Romans; of which every second
line of the sixteenth epode of Horace is an
example:

Sūis ēt ipsā Rōmā vīribus rūit.

Some criticks confound our Alexandrine with
the French heroick verse. But the latter,
though it sometimes contains the same num-
ber of syllables, is not Iambick at all, but
rather Anapestick, having for the most part
two short for one long syllable, and in rhythm
corresponds nearly to the following:

Now see, when they meet, how their honours behave:
Noble captain, your servant: Sir Arthur, your slave.
Pray how does my lady? My wife's at your service.
I think I have seen her picture by Jervis.

The Alexandrine, like other English Iam-
bicks, may occasionally take an additional
short syllable:

With

With freedom by my side, and soft-eyed Melancholy.

7. The seventh and last form of our Iambick measure is made up of seven iambuses :

The Lōrd dēscēndēd frōm ābōve, ānd bōw'd thē
hēāvēns hīgh,

which was antiently written in one line ; but is now for the most part broken into two, the first containing four feet, and the second three. Chapman's translation of Homer's Iliad is the longest work I have seen in this measure. It is now considered as a Lyrick verse ; and is very popular, and indeed very pleasing.

III. The shortest Trochaick verse in our language is that used by Swift in a burlesque poem called a Lilliputian Ode, consisting of one trochee and a long syllable.

In āmāze
Loſt I gaze.

This measure is totally void of dignity, and cannot be used on any serious occasion. I am therefore surprised, that Brown, in his excellent ode on the Cure of Saul, should have adopted it in a speech ascribed to the Supreme Being :

Tumult cease.
Sink to peace.

2. The second English form of the pure Trochaick consists of two feet, and is likewise too brief for any serious purpose ;

On

On the mōūntain,
By a fountain :

or of two feet and an additional long syllable :

In the dāys ōf ōld
Stories plainly told
Lovers felt annoy.

These three lines are from an old ballad : the measure is very uncommon.

3. The third species consists of three trochees ;

Whēn the scās wēre rōāring,
Phyllis lay deploring :

or of three trochees with an additional long syllable ;

Thēē the vōice the dānce ōbēy.

This is often mixed with the lambick of four feet, and makes an agreeable variety, when judiciously introduced, as in the *Allegro* and *Penseroso* of Milton ;

Iamb. But come, thou goddess fair and free,
In heaven yeled Euphrosyne.

Troch. Come, and trip it as you go ;
On the light fantastick toe.

4. The fourth Trochaick species consists of four trochees ;

Dāys ōf ease and nights ōf pleāsūre.

Which followed alternately by the preceding, forms a beautiful Lyrick verse, whereof we have

have a specimen in one of the finest ballads in the English language:

As near Pörtöbellö lyīng On the gently swelling
flood
At midnight with streamers flying Our triumphant
navy rode.

It is remarkable, that (as Mr. West has somewhere observed) the same measure occurs in the Greek tragedians, as in this of Euripides:

* Προσκυνὸς ἄναξ νόμοισι βαρβαροῖσι προσπῶν.

And there is an elegant Latin poem called *Pervigilium Veneris*, commonly ascribed to Catullus; of which, allowing for some varieties incident to the Latin Trochaick verse, the measure is the same:

Ver novum, ver jam canorum; vere nubent alites;
Vere concordant amores; vere natus orbis est.

With an additional long syllable, our fourth Trochaick species would be as follows:

Idle, after dinner, in his chair,
Sat a farmer, ruddy, fat, and fair.

But this measure is very uncommon.

5. So is the fifth Trochaick species, consisting of five trochees; whereof I do not remember to have seen a specimen in any printed poem.

All that walk on foot or ride in chariots,
All that dwell in palaces or garrets.

* Ηγεμῶν δ' αὐτὸς καὶ κατὰ βασιλείᾳς ἀγασσάμενος

G

This

This sort of verse, with an additional long syllable, might be thus exemplified :

Pleasant was the morning, and the month was May,
Colin went to London in his best array.

Some Scotch ballads are in this measure ; but I know not whether I have ever seen a specimen in English.

6. The sixth form of the pure English Trochaick consists of six trochees ; whereof the following couplet is an example :

On a mountain stretch'd beneath a hoary willow
Lay a shepherd swain, and view'd the rolling billow.
which is, I think, the longest Trochaick line
that our language admits of.

IV. The shortest possible Anapestick verse must be a single anapest :

But in vain
They complain.

But this measure is ambiguous : for, by laying the emphasis on the first and third syllables, we might make it Trochaick. And therefore the first and simplest form of our anapestick verse is made up of two anapests :

But his courage gain fail,
For no arts could avail.

or of two anapests with an additional short syllable :

Then his courage gain fail him,
For no arts could avail him.

2. The

2. The second consists of three anapests :

With hēr mīēn shē ēnāmōūrs thē brāve,
 With her wit she engages the free,
 With her modesty pleases the grave ;
 She is every way pleasing to me.

This is a delightful measure, and much used in pastoral songs. Shenstone's ballad in four parts, from which these lines are quoted, is an exquisite specimen. So is the Scotch ballad of *Tweedside*, and Rowe's *Despairing beside a clear stream* ; which last is perhaps the finest love-song in the world. And that the same measure is well suited to burlesque, appears from the very humorous ballad called *The tippling Philosophers* ; which begins thus, *Diogenes surly and proud, &c.*—Observe, that this, like all the other anapestick forms, often (indeed for the most part) takes an iambus in the first place,

Despāirīng bēsīde ā clēar strēām ;
 and formerly in the first and third,
 Grīm kīng ōf thē ghōsts, mākē hāste
 And bring hither all your train :

But this last variety is unpleasing to a modern ear.—With an additional short syllable it is as follows :

Sāys mŷ ūclē, I prāy yōu dīscōvēr
 Why you pine and you whine like a lover :

which, used alternately with the preceding, makes the measure of the witty ballad of

Molly Mog, written by Gay, and often imitated.

3. The third form of the pure English anapestick consists of four anapests :

At the clōse ǒf the dāy, when the hāmlēt is still.—
If I live to grow old, as I find I go down. —

This measure, which resembles the French heroick verse, is common in English songs and ballads, and other short compositions both comical and serious. It admits a short syllable at the end,

On the cold cheek of Death smiles and roses are
blending :

and sometimes also between the second and third foot,

In the mōrning when sōber, in the ēvening when
mēllōw :

which is the longest form of the regular Anapestick in the English language.

To one or other of these seven Iambick, six Trochaick, and three Anapestick, species, every line of English poetry, if we except those few that are composed of dactyls, may be reduced. I have given only the simplest form of each. The several licences or variations, that these simple forms admit of, might be without difficulty enumerated : but I cannot at present enter into the niceties of English prosody.

Sidney

Sidney endeavoured to bring in English hexameters, and has given specimens of them in the *Arcadia*. And Wallis, in his grammar, translates a Latin hexameter,

Quid faciam? moriar? et Amyntam perdet
Amyntas?

into an English one,

What shall I do? shall I die? shall Amyntas murder
Amyntas?

Mr. Walpole, in his catalogue of Royal and Noble authors, ascribes the following to Queen Elizabeth:

Persius a crab-staff, bawdy Martial, Ovid a fine
wag.

But this sort of verse has never obtained any footing in our poetry: and I think I could prove, from the peculiarities of its rhythm, that it never can.

So much for the nature and use of EMPHASIS: which I divided into *Rhetorical* and *Syllabick*; subdividing the latter into the *long-vowelled* emphatick syllable, which is always long, and the *short-vowelled* emphatick syllable, which, when long, is made so by the complexness of the final consonants.

C H A P. V.

Of Accent. Its nature and use.—Standard of Pronunciation.

EMPHASIS is the work of the lungs ; but ACCENT is performed by the contraction or dilatation of the glottis. For, while we speak with understanding, our voice is continually varying, not only its emphasis, but also its *tone*, from acute to grave, and from grave to acute. This is Accent. Inaccurate observers are not sensible of it in themselves, but think they speak without any tone ; though at the same time they allow, that people who come from a distance have a tone in their speech, that is perceptible enough, and not very agreeable. And the stranger complains of their accent in the same terms, and with equal justice.

Thus I have heard a man of Edinburgh say, We have no tone ; our voice in speaking is uniform, and not more grave, or more acute at one time, than at another ; but go to Glasgow, and there you will hear a tone ; or go to Aberdeen, and you will hear a tone still more remarkable, though of a different kind. Nay, a Londoner, a man of wit and genius, affirmed in my hearing, that the English spoken in the metropolis was

was for this particular reason the most elegant, because there, in polite company, the speech was unaccented, whereas, in every other part of the British empire, people spoke with a tone. And a clergyman of Virginia assured me very seriously, that the English of that province was the best in the world; and assigned the same reason in favour of the Virginian pronunciation. But every word these gentlemen spoke was to my ear a convincing proof, that they were mistaken. It is true, the North-American English accent is not so animated, as that of Middlesex, and the adjoining counties; but it is very perceptible notwithstanding. In fact, there is no such thing in language as monotony, or a continuation of the same note in speech, without ever rising above, or falling below it. Some children are taught to read in this manner; but their pronunciation is insipid and ridiculous. And though a man, who has a musical ear, and the command of his voice, might no doubt utter many words without any variation of accent, yet, if he were to speak so in company, he would be supposed to have lost his wits.

But, if every body speak with a tone, why, it may be said, does not every body perceive his own, as well as his neighbour's? It may be answered, that some, nay that many, persons do perceive their own accent; and that they, who do not, become insen-

sible of it by habit. We sometimes meet with those who have acquired a custom of speaking very loud, or very low, and yet are not sensible, that they speak lower or louder than other people. Nay profane swearers have been heard to affirm with an oath, that they were not swearing. Our native accent, especially if we have never been from home, being continually in our ear, it is no wonder that we should not discern its peculiarities. But let a man, who has been born and bred in Aberdeen, live two or three years in Edinburgh or London; and he shall become both insensible to the tone of the place of his residence, and also sensible of the accent that adheres to the dialect of his native town. In England, in Ireland, in the south and in the north of Scotland, the people speak dialects of one and the same language: and yet it is not difficult to know, by the tone of his voice in speaking, even before we hear him so plainly as to distinguish the words, whether the speaker be of England or of Ireland, a native of Lothian, or of Kincardineshire, of Aberdeen, or of Inverness. And if even the provincial dialects of the same tongue are distinguishable by their accents, we may with reason conclude, that the languages of different nations will be more remarkably distinguished in this way: which in fact is found to be the case.

Of

Of all the nations upon earth, the antient Greeks seem to have been the most attentive to language. Their own they studied, both in the composition, and in the pronunciation, with extraordinary care. The tones of it could not escape the notice of that sagacious people. In order to make these of easier acquisition to strangers, they did what no other nation ever thought of doing, they used in writing certain characters, still retained in their books, and called the Greek accents, of which the meaning was, to regulate the tone of the voice in speech. We know they were invented for this purpose; though we cannot now make any use of them in our pronunciation of the Greek tongue.

It has been said, that the syllable marked with the *acute* accent was pronounced four or five notes higher than the non-accented syllables; that the *grave* accent signified a fall of the voice through the same interval nearly; and that the *circumflex* denoted a rise followed by a fall, which, as it took up double the time of a simple fall or rise, made the syllable so accented necessarily long. But I am not satisfied with this account: for the passage quoted by a learned author, from Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in proof of it, is very obscure. At any rate, these marks could have regulated the syllabick accents only; whereas, with us, accent is more distinguishable in the cadence of words and phrases,

phrases*, than in syllables. Be this, however, as it will (for I affirm nothing positively in a matter so little known) it is evident, that the Latin word *accentus* (from *ad* and *cantus*), and the correspondent term in Greek † *prosodia* (from *pros* and *ôdê*), must, in their primitive signification, have had a reference to song, or musical tone, and not (as some have thought) to those energies of the human voice, which in the former chapter are expressed by the word Emphasis.

But let it be observed, that though in speech the voice is continually varying its

* Mr. Sheridan, in those elegant Lectures which I heard him deliver at Edinburgh about twenty years ago, distinguished (if I rightly remember) the English interrogatory accent from the Irish and the Scotch, in this manner. His example was: "How have you been this great while?"—in pronouncing which, he observed, that towards the end of the sentence an Englishman lets his voice fall, an Irishman raises his, and a Scotchman makes his voice first fall and then rise. The remark is well founded; but it is difficult to express in unexceptionable terms a matter of so great nicety. I shall only add, that what is here said of the Scotch accent, though it may hold true of the more southerly provinces, is by no means applicable to the dialects that prevail in Aberdeenshire, and other parts of the north: where the voice of the common people, in concluding a clause or sentence, rises into a very shrill and sharp tone without any previous fall. "You bark in your speech," says a man of Edinburgh to one of Aberdeen: "And you growl and grumble in yours," replies the Aberdonian. In Inverness-shire, and the western parts of Moray, the accents become totally different, and resemble the tones and aspirations of the Euse,

† *prosodia*, from *pros ad*, and *odn cantus*,

tone,

tone, and is sometimes more acute, and at other times more grave, it does not, in modern languages at least, ascend or descend, by those musical intervals which are called notes, but rises and falls by degrees of variation incomparably more minute, and which our musical language has no terms nor symbols to express. A musician, sounding the string of a violin by drawing his bow across, and at the same time making his finger *slide* up and down the string without *lifting* it, would produce a sort of sound somewhat similar, in its *mode* of rising and falling, to those varieties of accent which take place in language. An attempt has lately been made by Mr. Steele, to express certain accents of the English tongue by a new-invented sort of written characters. The work, I hear, is very ingenious; but, as I have not seen it, I can say nothing more about it.

From what has been said, we may learn, that, as every nation and province has a particular accent, and as no man can speak intelligibly without one, we ought not to take offence at the tones of a stranger, nor give him any ground to suspect, that we are displeased with, or even sensible of them. However disagreeable his accent may be to us, ours, it is likely, is equally so to him. The common rule of equity, therefore, will recommend mutual forbearance in this matter. To speak with the English, or with the
8 Scotch,

Scotch, accent, is no more praiseworthy, or blameable, than to be born in England, or Scotland: a circumstance, which, though the ringleaders of sedition, or narrow-minded bigots, may applaud or censure, no person of sense, or common honesty, will ever consider as imputable to any man.

Are, then, all provincial accents equally good? By no means. Of accent, as well as of spelling, syntax, and idiom, there is a standard in every polite nation. And, in all these particulars, the example of approved authors, and the practice of those, who, by their rank, education, and way of life, have had the best opportunities to know men and manners, and domestick and foreign literature, ought undoubtedly to give the law. Now it is in the metropolis of a kingdom, and in the most famous schools of learning, where the greatest resort may be expected of persons adorned with all useful and elegant accomplishments. The language, therefore, of the most learned and polite persons in London, and the neighbouring Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, ought to be accounted the standard of the English tongue, especially in accent and pronunciation: syntax, spelling, and idiom, having been ascertained by the practice of good authors, and the consent of former ages.

And there are two reasons for this preference. One is, that we naturally approve as elegant

elegant what is customary among our superiours. And another, and a better, reason is, because the most enlightened minds must be supposed to be the best judges of propriety in speech, as well as in every other thing that does not affect the conscience.

The standard of speech being thus ascertained, provincial dialects are to be considered as more or less elegant, according as they more or less resemble it. And it has been the wish of many, that the same modes of language should prevail through the whole empire. But this, however desirable, is perhaps impossible. At least there never yet was any instance of it in an extensive country. The Greeks themselves, with all their philological accuracy, had different dialects : — the apostle Peter, when at Jerusalem, was known by his speech to be a man of Galilee : — Livy has been accused of provincial idioms, though his native city Padua was but two hundred miles from Rome : — in the southern part of this island there have long been two distinct languages, the English and Welch ; and two others in the north, the Scotch and Erse, which are different from these, as well as from one another : — the dialects of Lancashire and Yorkshire are hardly understood in London : — even in Kent, and in Berkshire, we hear words and sounds, that are not known in Middlesex : — nay, the speech of the learned
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Londoner and Parisian differs not a little, both in idiom, and in accent, from that of his unlettered fellow-citizens.

As Emphasis gives energy to pronunciation, Accent renders it graceful; and is no doubt of further benefit, in distinguishing from one another the several tribes of mankind. For in many cases, it might be inconvenient to mistake a stranger for a fellow-subject; or not to have the means of proving a man's identity, or his birth-place, from the tone of his language. By their handwriting, and features, individuals may be distinguished; and the national arrangements of mankind, by their words and accent. And of all the peculiarities of a foreign tongue, accent is the most difficult for a grown person to acquire. No Frenchman, who has not passed his infancy or childhood in England, will ever speak English with the true accent. Scotch men have lived forty years in London without entirely losing their native tone. And it may be doubted, whether it is possible for one, who has lived the first twenty years of his life in North Britain, ever to acquire all the niceties of English pronunciation.—The same thing may be remarked of other languages, and the natives of other countries.

C H A P. VI.

Absurdity of the Epicurean doctrine of the Origin of language: men must have spoken in all ages; the first man, by inspiration.—The variety of original tongues, a proof of the Scripture history of Babel.—All languages have some things in common, which it is the business of Universal Grammar to explain.

WE learn to speak, when our organs are most flexible, and our powers of imitation most active; that is, when we are infants. Yet even then, this is no easy acquisition, but the effect of daily exercise continued for several years from morning to night. Were we never to attempt speech, till we are grown up, there is reason to think that we should find it exceedingly difficult, if not impracticable. This appears, not only from what is recorded of mute Savages found in deserts, who, though sagacious enough and of no great age, could never be taught to speak distinctly; one of whom, answering this description, was alive, and in England, a few years ago, and perhaps is alive still: but also from a fact more observable, namely, that in every language there are certain accents and articulate sounds, which they only can pronounce with ease, who have learned to do so
when

when very young. Nay every province almost has some peculiarities of pronunciation, which the people of the neighbouring provinces find it very difficult to imitate, when grown up, but which, when they were children, they could have learned most perfectly in a few months. Infants, who have been taught to speak one language, acquire others with amazing facility. I knew an instance of a French child of six years old, who, on coming to Britain, forgot his mother tongue, and learned all the English he had occasion for, in little more than six weeks. A grown man, on the contrary, with all the helps of grammars, dictionaries, authors, masters, and conversation, seldom acquires a foreign tongue so as to speak it like a native.

If, then, there ever was a time, when all mankind were, as the Epicureans supposed, *mutum et turpe pecus*, a dumb and brutal race of animals, all mankind must, in the ordinary course of things, have continued dumb to this day. — For, first, to such animals speech could not be necessary; as they are supposed to have existed for ages without it; and it is not to be imagined, that dumb and beastly savages would ever think of contriving unnecessary arts, whereof they had no example in the world around them.

Lucretius tells us, that, at some early period, nobody knows when, the woods being set on fire, either by lightning, or by
trees

trees grated against each other in the agitation of a storm, human creatures, who, like the world and all things in it, had been formed of atoms falling together without order, direction, or cause, and who had hitherto lived dispersed and naked, as well as dumb, were so enervated by the heat of the conflagration, that they could never after hold out against the injuries of the weather:—that, constrained to take shelter in holes and caverns, males and females, jumbled together by accident, became known to each other, and in time resolved themselves into small associations or families:—that from henceforth men knew their own offspring; which formerly they did not; the intercourse of the sexes being then fortuitous and temporary, and without friendship on either side:—that the minds of those rugged savages, softened by the blandishments of domestick life, became in time somewhat more rational; and, after a little communication with the neighbouring families, found it necessary, for the general safety, to institute certain artificial distinctions of right and wrong, whereof, till this period, they had never been conscious. These new notions, however, could not be enforced, nor obtain authority, without promises and compact; for the making of which, it was further requisite to invent certain signs of thought, that should have a more definite meaning, than the yells and gestures that had hitherto given expression

to their feelings. And thus, both speech and moral sentiments were invented; which, according to this account, were as really the work of human art, as houses, waggons, ships, or any other piece of mechanism.

The beauty of Lucretius's poetry made this system fashionable at Rome. Horace adopted it, and has in a few well-known lines * given a summary of it; and Virgil, in his youth, (for he afterwards became a Platonist) is supposed to have been tinctured

- * Cum prorepserunt primis animalia terris,
Mutum et turpe pecus, glandem atque cubilia propter,
Unguibus et pugnis, dein fusilibus, atque ita porro
Pugnabant armis, quæ post fabricaverat usus;
Donec verba, quibus voces sensusque notarent,
Nominaque invenere; dehinc absillere bello, &c.

Lib. i. Sat. 3. v. 97.

The following paraphrase has nothing of the elegance of Horace or Lucretius; but seems to have all the elegance that so ridiculous a doctrine deserves:

When men out of the earth of old
A dumb and beastly vermin crawl'd;
For acorns, firr, and holes of shelter,
They, tooth and nail, and helter skelter,
Fought fist to fist; then with a club
Each learn'd his brother brute to drub;
Till, more experienced grown, these cattle
Forged fit accoutrements for baule.
At last (Lucretius says, and Creech)
They let their wits to work on speech:
And, that their thoughts might all have marks
To make them known, these learned clerks
Lest off the trade of cracking crowns,
And manufactured verbs and nouns.

with

with it. Nay Tully himself *, though no admirer of Epicurean tenets, appears rather partial to this account of the origin of speech, laws, and policy; which, though repugnant to history, and fraught with absurdity, several authors of latter times have endeavoured to revive.

One would wonder, what charms men could find in a system so degrading to our nature; or what evidence in that which has no other foundation, than poetical fancy and wild hypothesis. The Pagans, indeed, who knew little of the origin of mankind, might be excused for favouring an opinion, which, as it appears in Lucretius, has at least harmonious numbers, and elegant description to recommend it. And yet, unseduced by poetical allurements, Quintilian declares, in the language of true philosophy, that moral sentiments are natural to us, and that men had speech from the beginning, and received that choice gift from their Creator. And Ovid's beautiful account of the first men seems to have been composed, partly from Hesiod's golden-age, and partly from traditions founded on the Mosaic history of the creation.—That we were at first good and happy, and lost our felicity when we lost our innocence,—is it not an idea more honourable to our nature, more friendly to virtue, and more consonant to the general notions

* De Inventionibus, lib. 1. Tuscul. quart. lib. 5.

of mankind, than that we were in the beginning a species of wild beast, and afterwards by improvement degenerated into wicked and wretched men? If there be, in the consciousness of honourable descent, any thing that elevates the soul, surely those writings cannot be on the side of virtue which represent our nature, and our origin, as such as we should have reason to be ashamed of. But he, who tells me, upon the authority of Scripture, and agreeably to the dictates of right reason, that we are all descended from beings, who were created in the image of God, wise, innocent, and happy; that, by their and our unworthy conduct, human nature is miserably degraded; but that, on the performance of certain most reasonable conditions, we may retrieve our primitive dignity, and rise even to higher happiness, than that of our first parents;—the man, I say, who teaches this doctrine, sets before me the most animating motives to virtue, humility, and hope, to piety and benevolence, to gratitude and adoration.

Other absurdities in this account of the origin of society I may possibly touch upon hereafter. At present I would only observe, that *speech* could not have been invented in the way here described. For to animals in this state of brutality I have already remarked, that language could not be needful; and it is hardly to be supposed, that dumb and beastly

beastly creatures would apply themselves to the cultivation of unnecessary arts, which they had never felt any inconvenience from the want of, and which had never been attempted by other animals. To which I may add, what is clear from some of the preceding observations, that Speech, if invented at all, must have been invented, either by children, who were incapable of invention, or by men, who were incapable of speech. And therefore reason, as well as history, intimates, that mankind in all ages must have been speaking animals; the young having constantly acquired this art by imitating those who were elder. And we may warrantably suppose, that our first parents must have received it by immediate inspiration.

As the first language, whatever it was, must therefore have been perfect; and liable to no depravation from a mixture of foreign idioms; and held in reverence by those who spoke it, that is, by all mankind, on account of its divine original; we may believe, that it would continue unaltered for many ages. Accordingly Scripture informs us, that when the building of Babel was begun, about eighteen hundred years after the fall, the whole earth was of one speech. And, had no miraculous interposition taken place, it is probable, that some traces of it would have remained in every language to this day. For, though, in so long a time, many words must have

been changed, many introduced, and many forgotten, in every country, yet men being all of the same family, and all deriving their speech from the only one primitive tongue, it may be presumed, that some of the original words would still have been in use throughout the whole earth : even as in all the modern languages of Europe some Greek, and some Hebrew, and a great deal of Latin, is still discernible. But Providence thought fit to prevent this ; and, by confounding the language of the builders of Babel, to establish in the world a variety of primitive tongues.

This miracle could not fail to be attended with important consequences. Those men only would remain in the same society who understood one another : and so the human race would be broken into a number of small tribes or nations, each of which would keep together, and consequently at some distance from the rest. A general dispersion would follow : and in this way it is probable, that the whole world would be sooner inhabited, than if all the species had remained united in one great nation. And the distinctions of friend and stranger, of citizen and foreigner, would now take place ; whence rivalry would arise ; than which nothing more effectually promotes industry, and the various arts of life.

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If it were not for what is recorded of Babel, the very great diversities of human speech would be a marvellous phenomenon. Languages are either Primitive, or Derived. That those which are formed out of the same parent tongue should all resemble it and one another, and yet should all be different, is not more wonderful, than that children and their parents should be marked with a general family likeness, and each distinguished by peculiar features. Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, French, and a great deal of the English tongue, are derived from the Latin; with the addition of many new words, and new modes of termination and syntax, which were introduced by the northern nations. And therefore all these languages resemble the Latin and one another; and yet each is different from it, and from all the rest. But, if we could compare two original or primitive tongues together, the Hebrew, for instance, with the Gothick or with the Celtick, or the language of China with that of the Hurons in North America, we should not discern, perhaps, the least similitude: which, considering that all mankind are of the same family, could not be fully accounted for, without supposing, that some preternatural event, like that of the confusion at Babel, had some time or other taken place. But this history solves all difficulties. And we have no more reason to be surprised, that different nations, though related in blood,

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should

should speak languages totally unlike, than that cousins of the twentieth remove, living in different climates, some in houses and some in caves, some naked and others clothed, some burning in the torrid zone, and others freezing in the polar circle, should differ in their features and complexion.

But, as the miracle at Babel introduced no material change into human nature; and as, ever since the flood, men have had the same faculties, have been placed in the same or in like circumstances, have felt the same wants, found comfort in the same gratifications, and acted from the influence of the same motives; it is reasonable to infer, that the *thoughts* of men must in all ages have been nearly the same. In the most antient histories we find, that the modes of thinking and acting, of believing and disbelieving, of approbation and disapprobation, are perfectly similar to what we experience in ourselves, and in the world around us. Now, as human thoughts discover themselves by language, and as the thoughts of men in one age and nation are similar to those in another, is it not probable, that there may be in all human languages some general points of resemblance, in structure at least, if not in sound? Since, for example, all men in all ages must have had occasion to speak of acting, and of being acted upon, of good and of bad qualities, and of the various objects of outward sense,

sense, must there not in every language be verbs, and adjectives, and nouns? What one nation calls * *hippos*, another may call *equus*, a third *cavallo*, a fourth *cheval*, and a fifth *horse*; that is, different compositions of articulate sound may stand for the same animal in different nations: but, in every nation, where this animal is known and spoken of, there must be some name for it; and words also to express its qualities, as *good*, *bad*, *strong*, *swift*, *weak*, *slow*, *black*, *white*, *great*, *small*, and its actions, as *running*, *walking*, *eating*, *drinking*, *neighing*, &c.

Languages, therefore, resemble men in this respect, that, though each has peculiarities, whereby it is distinguished from every other, yet all have certain qualities in common. The peculiarities of individual tongues are explained in their respective grammars and dictionaries. Those things, that all languages have in common, or that are necessary to every language, are treated of in a science, which some have called *Universal* or *Philosophical Grammar*; whereof I shall now endeavour to unfold the principles. The knowledge of it will not only illustrate what we may already have learned of the grammatical art; but also, by tracing that matter to its first elements, will give us more comprehensive views of it than can be obtained from any particular grammar; and at the

* *hippos*.

same

same time make us better judges of the nature and extent of human language, and of the connection, that obtains between our words and thoughts. Considered as resulting from, and as founded in, the faculties and circumstances of human beings, the principles of grammar form an important, and very curious, part of the philosophy of the human mind.

Much new discovery is not to be looked for, in an investigation that has been several times attempted already with good success. Yet most of those who have gone before me in this enquiry (as far at least as I am acquainted with them) have both profited by the labours of their predecessors, and also made considerable improvements of their own. Whether I shall be thought to have done so in any degree, I know not. This, however, let me be permitted to say, that for many of the following, as well as of the preceding, remarks, I am not indebted to former authors; that in some particulars I have ventured to differ, and I hope not without reason, from those whom I esteem, and by whose writings I have been instructed; and that, though several of the topicks are not without obscurity, the whole is delivered in a style, which, by repeated experience, I know to be intelligible, and not uninteresting, even to very young persons. Speculations of this nature are not so soon exhausted

as some people may imagine. Every writer and teacher, who has taken pains to form a style, and to understand his subject, will be found to have a manner of his own: and as long as readers and hearers differ in their tastes and powers of comprehension, so long it may be useful, in explaining the sciences, to vary the modes of illustration and argument.

But before I proceed to Universal Grammar, it will be proper to make some remarks on language rendered visible by writing.

C H A P. VII.

Of the Art of Writing ; its importance, and origin.—Different sorts of it practised by different nations.—A short History of Printing.

A WORD is an audible and articulate sign of thought : a Letter is a visible sign of an articulate sound. The use of letters is a wonderful invention ; but by no means universal. Every man can speak who is not deaf ; and men have spoken in all ages ; but in many nations the art of writing is still unknown.

Words spoken make an immediate impression, but depend, for their permanence, upon the memory of the speaker and hearer ; and the best memory loses more than it retains : but words written may be preserved from age to age, and made as durable as any thing human can be.—When we speak, we are understood no further than we are heard ; but what is written may be sent round the world, and circulated in all nations.—We can speak no longer than we live : but the thoughts of men, who died three thousand years ago, are still extant in writing ; and, by means of this divine art, will continue to entertain and instruct mankind

kind to the end of the world.—Moreover, while we only meditate, our memory is not always so faithful as to enable us to revise our thoughts, compare them together, and render them consistent: but by writing we make them pass and repass in review before us, till we have made them such as we wish them to be.—God has been pleased to reveal his will to us in writing; and, without this art, policy, which is the most venerable of all *human* institutions, would be exceedingly imperfect.

The importance of writing to the virtue and happiness of mankind, as well as to the ascertaining, methodizing, preserving, and extending of human knowledge, is indeed so great, that one is apt to wonder, how any age or country should be ignorant of an art, which may be acquired with so little difficulty, and exercised with so much pleasure. But, though of easy acquisition to us, it is in itself neither easy nor obvious. Savages articulate their mother tongue, without troubling themselves about the analysis of sentences, or the separation of words; of resolving words into the simple elementary sounds they have no idea: how then should they think of expressing those simple sounds by visible and permanent symbols! In fact, alphabetical writing must be so remote from the conception of those who never heard of it, that without divine aid it would seem to be unsearch-

searchable and impossible. No wonder then, that some authors should have ascribed it to Adam, and supposed it to be the effect of inspiration.

Of the nature of Antediluvian, or of the first, writing, whether it was alphabetical, or by hieroglyphicks, we can only form conjectures. The wisdom and simple manners of the first men would incline me to think, that they must have had an alphabet, for hieroglyphick characters, imply quaintness and witticism. That Moses knew an alphabet, is certain: and we may venture to say, he learned it in Egypt, where he was born and educated.

If this be granted, the hieroglyphicks of Egypt and Ethiopia will appear of later date than alphabetical writing; and to have been contrived, as many learned men have thought, by priests or politicians, for expressing, in a way not intelligible to the vulgar, the mysteries of religion and government.—A hieroglyphick, or *sacred sculpture*, is an emblematical figure, which denotes, not an articulate sound, as a letter does, but an idea, or thing. It is a representation of some part of the human body, or of some animal, vegetable, or work of art; but it means, not that which it represents, but something else that is, or is supposed to be, of a like nature. Thus, the figure of a lamp, among the Egyptian priests, signified, not a lamp, but
life;

life; a circle was the emblem of eternity; and an eye on the top of a sceptre denoted a sovereign.

Hieroglyphicks must have been a very imperfect mode of expressing thought. They took up a great deal of room; could hardly be connected so as to form a sentence; were made slowly, and with difficulty; and, when made, were no better than riddles.

Cæsar, in his account of the Druids of Gaul, relates, that they obliged their disciples to get by heart so great a number of verses, that the term of their education was sometimes lengthened out to twenty years. And we are told, that they accounted it unlawful to commit those verses to writing, notwithstanding that they understood the Greek alphabet, and made use of it in their ordinary business both publick and private. "Two things," continues he, "seem to me to have determined them in this: first, that their tenets might not be published to the vulgar; and, secondly, that having no books to trust to, they might be the more careful to improve their memory, and more accurate students of the mysteries of their order."* — May not the Egyptian hieroglyphicks have been invented for the same purposes? By the vulgar they could not be understood: and their enigmatical

* Cæsar. Bell. Gall. lib. vi. cap. 13.

nature made it necessary for the priests to study them, and consequently the doctrines implied in them, with extraordinary perseverance and application.

When the Spaniards invaded Mexico in the fifteenth century, the news of their landing was sent to the emperor Motezuma, not by writing, or by hieroglyphicks (for the Mexicans had neither) but by a rude draught or picture of the ships. This is no doubt a natural way of expressing things visible: but I cannot agree in opinion with those authors, who suppose it to have been the most ancient form of *writing*; as it is so laborious, so liable to be misunderstood, expressive of so few ideas, and in general so very inconvenient. The Mexican, who carried the news, was certainly able to give a verbal account of what had happened. If he carried also a draught of the ships, it must have been, as we carry plans, with a view to give a more lively idea than words could convey. European ships had never appeared in that part of the world before; and if those people had any skill in drawing, it was as natural for them to practise it on so memorable an occasion, as it would be for us, if a huge unknown sea-monster were to be thrown upon the land.

In Peru and Chili, when we first became acquainted with those countries, there was found a curious art, that in some measure
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supplied the place of writing. It was called *Quipos*; and consisted in certain arrangements of threads, or knots, of different colours; whereby they preserved, in a way which we cannot explain, inventories of their moveables, and the remembrance of extraordinary events. The knowledge of the *Quipos* is said to have been a great mystery, handed down by tradition from fathers to their children, but never divulged by the parent, till he thought his life near an end.—Belts of *wampum* (as it is called) are probably contrivances of a like nature, made of a great number of little beads of different colours artfully, and not inelegantly, interwoven. These belts are used by the Indians of North America in their treaties; and are said to express, I know not how, the particulars of the transaction.

In China, if we believe what is reported by travellers, the art of writing has been understood these three or four thousand years; and yet they have no alphabet to this day*.

* This is the common opinion, and was once mine. But I have been lately informed, by a Scotch gentleman, who resided long at Batavia, that a Chinese, on hearing his christian name and surname, wrote something upon paper, and that another Chinese, on seeing it, articulated the two words distinctly. This could hardly have been done, except by those who understood the art of expressing by written symbols the elementary sounds of language. And yet it is possible, that the syllables which compose the name might be Chinese words. The gentleman, however, is of opinion, that the trading people of China have a sort of alphabet.

There is for each word a distinct character ; and the number of words is said to be four-score thousand : so that a Chinese doctor grows old and dies, before he has learned one half of his letters. The characters are of the nature of hieroglyphicks, but so curtailed or contracted for the sake of expedition, that their primitive shape cannot be guessed from their present form. They divide them into four classes : the antient, which are preserved on account of their antiquity, but never used ; a second species appropriated to publick inscriptions ; a third, common enough in printing and even in writing, but too unwieldy for daily use ; and a fourth, more manageable, for ordinary business. — It is further said of the Chinese tongue, that every word in it is a monosyllable ; and that one and the same syllable may have ten or a dozen different meanings, according to the tone with which it is pronounced. If this be true, there must be more accent in it, than in any other language that has yet been heard of ; and we need not wonder, that it is of so difficult acquisition to strangers.

Some of our modern philosophers affect to be great admirers of the genius, policy, and morality of the Chinese. The truth is, that Europeans know very little of that remote people ; and we are apt to admire what we do not understand : and for those who, like the Chinese, obstinately shut their eyes against

against the light of the Gospel, the French authors, now-a-days, and their imitators, are apt to cherish an extraordinary warmth of brotherly affection.—But if we consider, that, though their empire is supposed to have stood for upwards of four thousand years, the Chinese are still unskilled in almost every branch of literature; that their most learned men have never thought it worth while to invent or adopt an alphabet, though they must have heard that there is such a thing in other parts of the world; that their painting, though gaudy, is without perspective, and looks like a mass of things, men, trees, houses, and mountains, heaped on one another's heads; that, when a fire broke out at Canton, whereof Commodore Anson was an eye-witness, they did not know how to extinguish it, but held out the images of their gods to it: if we also consider their proneness to deceit and theft; their low cunning; their absurd jealousy and timidity, which refuses almost all communication with the rest of the world; their excessive admiration of their own wisdom, and their contempt of other nations, although they must be sensible, that one European ship of war could have nothing to fear from the whole force of their empire:—if, I say, we reflect on these things, we shall be inclined to think, that they are an ignorant and narrow-minded people, dextrous indeed in some petty manufactures, but incapable of enterprise, and invention, and

averse to inquiry. The long continuance and strictness of their policy, which some admire as the effect of profound wisdom, is to me a proof of their want of spirit: those nations being most liberal in their conduct to strangers, and withal most liable to political commotion, who are most eminently distinguished for magnanimity and genius.

When we think, how difficult, and how inadequate, the methods hitherto mentioned are, of rendering language visible and permanent, we must be struck with wonder at the usefulness and perfection of the alphabet. By this invention, if it may be so called, although every sound in language has a correspondent symbol, yet the characters are so few, and of a form so simple, that one may learn the use of them in a very short time. Nay, with the help of a few additional symbols, one alphabet might serve for many languages. The Latin, and all the modern tongues derived from it, have the same system of letters: and if we were accustomed to see Greek and Hebrew in the Roman character, we should read them as well in that as in their own.—When things are fairly reduced to their first principles, it is pleasing to observe, how the understanding is enlightened, and how easy that becomes in practice, which before seemed impossible from its multiplicity. Chinese Doctors have no doubt been told, that by the European methods a
perfect

perfect knowledge of written language might be acquired in half a year; but I suppose it would be no easy matter to make them believe it.

The alphabets of different tongues differ considerably in the number, order, and shape of the letters; and, as was before observed, it is presumable, that in all the alphabets now extant there are both defects and redundancies. But this, though an inconvenience, is not very material; as the difficulties of pronunciation that result from it are easily overcome.

The implements of writing have been different at different periods. In very early times, writing was performed by engraving upon stone. Such at its first appearance was the Decalogue. And in the deserts that lie between Egypt and Palestine, the rocks of certain mountains are said to be covered with antient characters, supposed by some to have been carved by the people of Israel, while they sojourned in that wilderness. Afterwards, letters delineated with a coloured liquid upon vegetable substances, as wood, the bark of trees, the Egyptian papyrus, (whence our word *paper*) were found more convenient on all ordinary occasions. The English term *book* is supposed to be derived from a Saxon word signifying a beech-tree; whence it would appear, that wooden manuscripts were in use among our ancestors; and

every body knows, that, in Latin, the bark of a tree, and a book, are called by the same name. Animal substances, especially the skins of sheep, goats, and calves, which in time came to be manufactured into parchment and vellum, were better suited to the purposes of writing, on account of their smoothness, pliability, and durability: they are still used in conveyances; and the first authentick copy of every British statute is engrossed on parchment.

The Romans, while they were composing, wrote with the sharp end of a bodkin or stylus upon tables covered with wax, and, when they wanted to correct any thing, erased the former impression with the other end, which was flat: whence Horace advises the author, who would compose what should be worthy of a second reading, to make frequent use of the other end of his pen *, that is, to correct much and carefully. When it was finised to their mind, they had it transcribed upon paper or parchment, or something of the same nature, called by Horace *charta* and *membrana*; which they rolled up, and kept in a box commonly made of cedar wood, or anointed with oyl of cedar, as a security against worms and rottenness. This roll of written parchment they termed *volumen*; a word which we have adopted; al-

* *Sæpe stylum vertas, iterum quæ digna legi sint Scriptura.* Sat. 1. 10. 72.

though

though our way of making up our books is very different, and much more convenient.

Pens, ink, and paper, according to the present use, were first known in Europe about six hundred years ago: but some writers will not allow them to be so antient. The learned Dr. Prideaux is of opinion, that the art of making paper of linen or flax is an eastern invention, and was introduced into Spain by the Saracens. But observe, that the *charta* mentioned by Pliny and other classick authors, though, like our paper, used both for writing and for binding up goods in parcels *, and also composed of vegetable ingredients, was however a different preparation: being made of the filmy fibres of the inner bark of the papyrus, laid on a table first parallel and then transverse, and glued together by the muddy water of the Nile, or, where that was wanting, by a paste made of fine flour and common water.

Printing, as well as paper-making, is of high antiquity in China. But the Chinese printing is very different from ours, and much more imperfect. They carve the characters of every page upon wood; so that their printing resembles our engraving. The first European printers proceeded in the same manner; but, as they had no intercourse with

* See Horace. Lib. ii. Epist. i. 270, 113. Lib. i. Sat. 2. 4.

China, their art was of their own invention. Printing by types, or moveable letters, is a great improvement; for, in this way, with a small provision of types, we may print many books different from one another: whereas, to make a book by the former method, there must for every page be an engraved block of wood; and the engravings could be of no further use, if the same book were never reprinted. This must have made our first efforts in printing very expensive and slow; but, slow and expensive as they were, the discovery was important, and made books incomparably more numerous, and consequently cheaper, than ever they could have been while manuscripts only were in use. For though the carving of the wooden plates would take up more time than the transcribing of several copies, yet when the plates were finished, thousands of copies might be printed off in a few days.

Little is known of the first printers: nor has either the era or the birth-place of this wonderful invention been exactly ascertained. The general opinion is, that printing with moveable types was first practised at Mentz about the year one thousand four hundred and fifty; and that an edition of the Bible of that date was the first printed book, Augustin *de civitate Dei* the second, and Tully's *offices* the third.

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One of the first printers was Fost, or Faust, or Faustus, who is thought by some to have been the inventor of moveable types. He did not choose to let the world into the secret of his art, for fear of lessening the price of his books. And therefore, when he exposed a parcel of them to sale at Paris, he gave out that they were manuscripts; which he might the more easily do, because no body could suppose they were any thing else. And, that they might pass for such, without suspicion, he had in printing left blank spaces for certain capital letters, which he afterwards inserted with the pen, flourished and illuminated, according to the fashion of the times. But, when it was observed, how exactly one copy corresponded with another, and that there was not the smallest variation in the shape, size, or place, even of a single letter, he was thought to have done what no human power could execute, and consequently to have intercourse with evil spirits; and found himself obliged, in order to avoid prosecution and punishment, to divulge the mystery of printing. Hence came the vulgar tale of Doctor Faustus, who is said in the story-book to have been a great magician, and to have sold himself to the devil.

On the usefulness of Printing, as the means of multiplying books without end, of promoting the improvement of arts and sciences, and of diffusing knowledge through all the
classes

classes of mankind, I need not enlarge, as the thing is too obvious to require illustration. I shall only mention one particular, which is abundantly striking. Common bibles are in this country sold in sheets to the retailer at fourteen shillings a dozen, or fourteen pence apiece; as I was informed by a person who dealt in that article to a very great extent. Thus is the price of the best book in the world reduced so low, that every person, however poor, may have one, either bought with his own money, or given him in charity. But, before the invention of printing, it would have been a great matter if every parish could have afforded to have a bible; as the expence of writing out so large a book would have been at least equal to that of building an ordinary country church.

To us, who are acquainted with both arts, it may seem strange, that the Greeks and Romans, who excelled in the engraving of seals and medals, should never think of plates or types for printing. But arts may appear obvious after they are known, which are very far from the imagination of those who never heard of them. The affairs of this world are ordered by Providence, who makes human wisdom subservient to its own good purposes. That the magnet attracts iron, was known to the antients; but its power of giving a polar direction to that metal was not found out till the thirteenth century.

Few

Few arts have so soon become perfect, as this of Printing. In the library of Marischal College there is a Latin translation of Appian, printed at Venice in the year fourteen hundred and seventy-seven, that is, in the twenty-seventh year of the art, which, in the nice cut of the letters and neatness of the press-work, is hardly inferior to any book of the present age. Its only fault, which it has in common with all the printed books of an early date, is the great number of contractions. These were much affected by the first printers, in imitation, no doubt, of the manuscript-writers, to whom they were a considerable saving both of time and of paper. They are now disused in most languages, except the Greek; and it is to be wished perhaps, that they were not used at all. In writing for one's own use one may employ abbreviations, or the cyphers of short hand, or any other characters that one is acquainted with; though even this is not prudent, except when one is obliged to write with uncommon expedition: but what is to be laid before the publick, or any other superior, should have all possible clearness, and ought therefore to be free from contractions, and the like peculiarities.

Before the middle of the sixteenth century, that is, in less than a hundred years after the invention of printing, this art was brought to its highest perfection, by the illustrious
Robert

Robert and Henry Stephen; who have a claim to our admiration and gratitude, not only as the greatest of printers, but also as the most careful editors, and most learned men, of modern times. The former published a *Thesaurus*, or Dictionary, of the Latin, and the latter a *Thesaurus* of the Greek tongue: works of astonishing accuracy and erudition, and without doubt the greatest works of their kind in the world. Henry's *Greek poets*, in folio, is to this day studied, and imitated, as a model of typographical excellence. And that edition by Robert, of the Greek Newtestament, of which a copy is just now before me, printed in the year one thousand five hundred and forty-six, and which is commonly called *O mirificam*, (possibly from the superlative elegance of the printing, but probably from the two first words of the Preface) is not yet surpassed in respect of beauty, nor perhaps equalled. Their style of printing has been successfully imitated by my lamented friends Robert and Andrew Foulis of Glasgow, who did much for the improvement of their country, and established a taste for elegant printing in Scotland; and whose folio *Homer* is one of the finest and most correct books that ever came from the press.

The Theory of Language.

PART II.

Of Universal Grammar.

INTRODUCTION.

THE words of different languages differ greatly in sound. Nay, in this respect, two languages may be so unlike, that the most perfect knowlege of the one would not enable us to understand a single word of the other. If, therefore, all languages have some things in common, those things must be sought for, not in the *sound* of the words, but in their *signification* and *use*.

Now words are of various characters in regard to signification : and if a person, ignorant of grammar, were to look into the vocabulary of any language, he would be so confounded with their multitude, as to think it impossible to reduce them into classes. And yet the species (or sorts) of words in the most comprehensive tongue are not many : in our own, which is sufficiently copious, they amount to no more than TEN : and, in the following short sentence, every one of the
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ten may be found once, and some of them twice. "I now see the good man coming, but alas! he walks with difficulty."—*I* and *he* are pronouns, *now* is an adverb, *see* and *walks* are verbs, *the* is an article, *good* is an adjective, *man* and *difficulty* are nouns, *coming* is a participle, *but* a conjunction, *with* a preposition, and *alas* an interjection. One would think a language must be very imperfect, that has not a word to answer each of those contained in this sentence.

May we not then infer, that in every language there must be nine or ten species of words; or, to express it otherwise, that Articles, Nouns, Pronouns, Adjectives, Verbs, Participles, Adverbs, Prepositions, Interjections, and Conjunctions, must be in all languages?—This, however, will not appear with full evidence, till we have taken a more particular view of these several sorts of words; and shown each of them to be necessary, or how far each of them may be necessary, for expressing certain modes of human thought, to which, from the circumstances of mankind in every age and nation, we have reason to think that all men would find it expedient to give utterance. Thus shall we unfold the principles of Universal Grammar, by tracing out those powers, forms, or contrivances, which, being essential to language, must be found in every system of human speech that deserves the name.

CHAP. I.
OF NOUNS.

SECT. I.

Of Nouns Primary, or Substantives.—Of Number, and Gender : which (taking these words in the Grammatical sense) depend, partly upon the nature of things, and partly upon custom and arbitrary rule.

THAT nouns, or the names of things, must make part of every language, will not be disputed. Men could not speak of one another, or of any thing else, without Substantives. Man, house, stone, mountain, earth, water, meat, drink, &c. must surely be spoken of in every nation.

A Substantive, or Noun, is a word denoting a substance; or, more properly, is "a word denoting the thing spoken of." Now the things we speak of either have a real existence, as man, tree, house, hatchet; or have had a real existence, as Babylon, Eden, Cesar; or are spoken of as if they had existed, or did exist, as Jupiter, Fairy, Lilliput; or are conceived by the mind as having at least the capacity of being characterised
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by qualities, as virtue, beauty, motion, swift-ness.—These last are called Abstract Nouns; and the understanding forms them, by abstracting, or separating, from any natural or artificial substance, either real, or imaginary, certain qualities, and making those qualities the subject of meditation or discourse: as—the eagle *flies*—its *flight* is swift:—the house *shakes*; its *shaking* is terrible:—Voltaire was *witty*; his *wit* was indecent:—Minerva and Venus were *beautiful*; but the *beauty* of the former was majestick, and the *beauty* of the latter alluring.

That the formation of abstract nouns is natural to man, in every condition wherein he can be placed, will appear, if we consider, that it is for their *qualities* that things are valued and attended to; and that, therefore, we must often compare qualities with one another, and consequently speak of them as being desirable, valuable, pleasant, great, small, good, evil, indifferent, &c. In this manner a quality is spoken of as some *thing*, that is itself characterised by qualities; which comes so near the description of a substance, that language gives it a name of the substantive form.—Perhaps, however, it might be doubted, whether abstract substantives be essential to language. Thousands of them indeed there are in all the tongues we are acquainted with; but in many cases their place might be supplied by other words; though
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I confess, that this would often give rise to awkward circumlocutions.

The qualities, ascribed to abstract nouns or ideas, may themselves be abstracted, and become the things spoken of, and so be characterised by other qualities. Thus from *beautiful animal*, *moving animal*, *cruel animal*, let the qualities be separated, and assume the substantive form, and they become *beauty*, *motion*, *cruelty*; which, as if they were real things, may be characterised by qualities, *great beauty*, *swift motion*, *barbarous cruelty*. These qualities also may be abstracted, and transformed into *greatness*, *swiftness*, *barbarity*; which may have new qualities assigned them equally susceptible of abstraction, *transitory greatness*, *inconceivable swiftness*, *brutal barbarity*.

In speaking of substances, or things, natural, artificial, imaginary, or abstract, all men will have occasion to mention, sometimes one of a kind, and sometimes more than one: *a man* is coming, or *men* are coming: I see a *ship*, or I see *ships*: he thought he saw a *ghost*, or he dreamed he was surrounded with *ghosts*: Augustus had many *virtues*, Nero had not *one virtue*. In every language, therefore, nouns must admit of some variety in their form, to denote *unity* and *plurality*. If the word *man*, for example, had no plural, it could not be known, when one said, I see the man coming, whether

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one or more than one was meant. The inconvenience arising from this ambiguity would soon show the necessity of removing it, either by altering the termination, or the middle or initial letters of the word, or by some other contrivance.

But this is not equally necessary in all cases. The word which denotes one individual substance and no other, and which Grammarians call a *proper name*, can never denote more than that one, and therefore cannot have plurality. *Epaminondas* can never be plural, so long as we know of no more than one of that name. In like manner, *Westminster abbey* denotes one particular building, *Rome* one particular city, *Etna* one particular mountain, and the *Thames* one particular river.

When these, and the like words, assume a plural, they then cease to be *proper names*, and signify a class or species of things, or perhaps supply the place of general appellatives. When I say, *the twelve Cæsars*, I use the noun, not as the proper name of an individual, but as a common appellative belonging to twelve persons, to each of whom it is equally applicable. When I say, that *twenty Thameses* united would not form a river so large as the Ganges, I use the word *Thames* to denote in general a river, or a quantity of running water, as large as the Thames. We speak of the Gordons, the Macdonalds,
the

the Howards, &c.; in all which cases, it is plain, that the noun, which bears the plural termination, is not the distinguishing name of one man, but a general name common to every individual of a tribe or family.

Further: When any individual person has rendered himself famous in a particular way, his name is sometimes given to such as are famous in the same way; and then, it becomes, in like manner, a common appellative, and admits of plurality. Mæcenās was a great patron of learning, and Virgil an excellent poet whom he patronised: and Martial has said, that “Virgils will not be wanting where there are Mæcenases.” Who does not see, that the meaning is, “Good authors will not be wanting, where there are great patrons?”

We are told, in our Grammars, that proper names for the most part want the plural. But the truth is, that proper names *always* want it: for when a name, that is commonly applied to one individual, assumes a plural form, it ceases to be a proper name. And as every such name *may* assume such a form, the Latin Grammarians, as well as the Greek, might have given examples of proper names with plural terminations. For *Cæsares*, *Cæsarum*, *Cæsaribus*, are as agreeable to Latin analogy, as * *Aineiai*, *Aineïa*, *Aineiais* are

* *Aineiai*, *Aineïa*, *Aineiais*.

to Greek.—It will occur perhaps, that some proper names are always plural, and have no singular, as *Athenæ*, *Mycenæ*, *Thebæ*, *the Devises*, &c. But this is merely accidental; and results not from the nature of the thing, but from the custom of a particular language; and is therefore a consideration that belongs not to Universal Grammar.

Every name in language, that denotes a *genus* or a *species*, may be applied either to one, or to many individuals of a *kind* or *sort* *, and

* When a number of things are found to resemble each other in some important particulars, we refer them to one class, species, or tribe, to which we give a name; and this name belongs equally to each individual comprehended in that class or species. Thus, the word *man*, *homo*, denotes a class of animals, and is equally applicable to every human being.—Again, finding several species or classes to resemble each other in certain common qualities, we refer them to a higher class called a *genus*, to which we give a name, that is equally applicable to every species and every individual comprehended under it. Thus all living things on earth resemble each other in this respect, that they have life. We refer them, therefore, to the genus called *animal*; and this word belongs to every species of animals, and to each individual animal.—Moreover, all things, animated and inanimate, agree in this, that they are created; and in this view we refer them to a class still higher, called *Creature*; a word which belongs equally to every genus and species of created things, and to each individual thing that is created.—Further still, All beings whatever resemble one another in this respect, that they *are* or *exist*; whence we refer them to a class still higher, and indeed the highest of all, called *Being*.—This gradation is seen at one glance in the following words; *Socrates*, *Man*, *Animal*, *Creature*, *Being*.

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and must by consequence be capable of expressing plurality, as well as unity. *Homo*, therefore, and *man*, must admit of some such variety as *homines* and *men*; because the word may be used of one person, or of any number of persons, of the human species. And this distinction of Singular and Plural would seem to be essential to the nouns of every language: at least we may venture to affirm, that it could not be wanting without great inconvenience. There are, indeed, in many tongues, and perhaps in all, some nouns that have no plural form, and others that have no singular, even when there is nothing in their signification to hinder it: but this, like the plural proper names, is accidental, and might have been otherwise, if custom and popular use had so determined.

In the Attick dialect, and poetical language, of the Greeks, there is also a *dual* number to express *two*. But this is not necessary; though several other ancient tongues

That class is called a *Species*, which comprehends under it, or is understood to comprehend, individuals; and that a *Genus*, which comprehends a number of species.

Antiently the English noun *Kind* was the same with *Genus*, and *Sort* with *Species*: but *kind* and *sort* have long been confounded by our best writers; and we are obliged to borrow the words *genus* and *species* from the Latin:—though, indeed, in good Latin authors, *Species* never has that meaning which we here give it; and which in the language of Cicero would be expressed thus, *pars quæ subiecta est generi*, the class, or division, that is subordinate to the genus.

have it, particularly the Hebrew, the Gothick, and the Celtick. For, languages being formed in some measure by accident, it is no wonder that there should be redundancies in them, as well as defects.—It has been said, that *ambo* in Latin, and *both* in English, are duals. But it is hardly worth while to introduce a new term into any grammar, for the sake of one example. Besides, there is this difference between the words in question and Greek dual nouns, that the latter are joined in syntax to verbs, adjectives and participles of the dual number; whereas *ambo* takes a plural verb, adjective and participle, and *both* takes a plural verb.

Another thing essential to nouns is *gender*. For language would be very imperfect, if it had no expression for the *sex* of animals. Now all things whatever are Male, or Female, or Both, or Neither.

The existence of hermaphrodites being uncommon, and even doubtful, and language being framed to answer the ordinary occasions of life, no provision is made, in any of the tongues we are acquainted with, for expressing, otherwise than by a name made on purpose, or by a periphrasis, Duplicity of sex. The genders therefore are only two, the *masculine* and the *feminine*: for what we call the *neuter* gender implies properly a negation of sex, or that the thing
which

which is said to be of this gender is *neither* male nor female.

In Hebrew, there is no neuter; every noun being either masculine or feminine: and when things without sex are expressed by pronouns, or alluded to by adjectives, they are more frequently feminine than masculine.*

All animals have sex; and therefore the names of all animals must have gender. But the sex of all is not equally obvious, nor equally worthy of attention. In those species that are most common, or whose outward appearance and circumstances are particularly attended to, the male is sometimes called by one name which is masculine, and

* More particularly: The demonstrative pronoun used for *this thing* (answering to *ταυτο hoc*) when no substantive is expressed, is feminine. Thus, in the Septuagint, and in Matt. xxi. 42. Παρεκ κυριου εγιστο αυτη και εστι θαυμαστη: literally, A Domino facta est *hec*, et est *miranda*.—Also when an adjective is used indefinitely without a noun, the gender in Hebrew is commonly feminine. Thus in Psal. xii. 4. “A tongue speaking *great things*,” and Psal. xxvii. 4. “*One thing* I desired;” the adjectives answering to *great* and *one*, are feminine: *Lingua loquens magnas: Unam petivi.*

Something like this idiom is observable in the vulgar dialects of North Britain; at least when things of eminence are spoken of. A Kincardineshire man says, of the river, that *she* is deep; of the watermill, that the frost will not permit *her* to go, &c. But things of less consideration, as a knife, a chair, &c. are neuter; and the sun is invariably masculine, and the moon feminine.

the female by a different name which is feminine. Thus in English we say man, woman; husband, wife; king, queen; lord, lady; father, mother; son, daughter; nephew, niece; uncle, aunt; boy, girl; horse, mare; cock, hen; boar, sow, &c. In others of similar distinction, the name of the male is altered only in the termination when applied to the female: as emperor, empress, antiently emperess; patron, patroness; shepherd, shepherdess; widower, widow; master, mistress, antiently masteress, and still pronounced so by the vulgar in some parts of Scotland. Sometimes we apply the same name to either sex, only prefixing or subjoining a particle to denote the gender; as he-ass, she-ass; cock-sparrow, hen-sparrow; peacock, peahen; moor-cock, moor-hen.

When the sex of any animal is not obvious, or not material to be known, the same name, in some languages, is applied without variation to all the species, and that name is said to be of the *common gender*, and assumes in concord either a masculine or a feminine adjective, participle, or pronoun, according as the one sex or the other is intended to be specified; as, in Latin *Bos albus* a white ox, *Bos alba* a white cow: but if no account is made of the sex, and only the species of animal signified, the gender of the name is frequently determined by its final letters*.

Beings

* In Greek, when women are mentioned merely as persons, and without any regard to sex, they are sometimes

Beings superiour to man, though we conceive them to be of no sex, are spoken of as masculine in most of the modern tongues of Europe, on account of their dignity; the male being, according to our ideas, the nobler sex. But idolatrous nations acknowledge both male and female deities; and some of them have given even to the Supreme Being a name of the feminine gender.

When we personify the virtues, we speak of them as if they were females; perhaps on account of their loveliness; or rather in compliance with the analogy of the Greek and Latin tongues. Thus we call Justice the queen of the virtues, not the king: and we say, that if Virtue were to take a visible form, all the world would be enamoured (not of his, but) of her charms.

The antients made females of the Furies; those dreadful beings, who were supposed to haunt the guilty in this world, and torment them in hell. This might be owing to the accidental termination of their name, or to some poetical fable concerning their origin: or perhaps it was thought, that, as nothing is

times in syntax connected with pronouns, articles, and participles, of the masculine gender. Of this the learned Dr. Clarke gives a variety of examples in his notes on Hom. Iliad. lib. v. vers. 778. Traces of the same idiom are to be seen in Latin authors. Thus in Plautus we read, *Quis ea est? Quis ea est mulier?* And thus, in Virgil, Æneas, speaking of his mother Venus, says, *Descendo, ac succente Deo.* *Æneid. ii. 632.*

so amiable as a beautiful and virtuous woman, so nothing is more hideous than extreme ugliness and rage united in the female form.

Some authors have supposed, that it is natural for the human mind to consider as masculine the names of such things as are eminent in power; and to make those feminine which denote what is peculiarly fitted for receiving, containing, or bringing forth. But though many plausible things may be said for this theory, it is also liable to many objections.

What in this world is more powerful than Death, which no animal can resist; or than the Sun, which is, as it were, the parent of life, both to animal, and to vegetable nature? Yet, though *Thanatos* is masculine in Greek, and though Mr. Harris seems to think, that the notion of a female Death would be ridiculous, *mors* in Latin, *mort* in French, *morte* in Italian, and *muerte* in Spanish, are all feminine*: and, though the moon is feminine, and the sun masculine, in many languages, yet, in the Saxon and

* One of our most correct poets scruples not to make Death a female in the following passage:

Lo, in the vale of years beneath,
A grievly troop are seen,
The painful family of *Death*,
More hideous than their queen.

Gray's Ode on Eaton College.

some

some other northern tongues, the sun is feminine, and the moon masculine.

If it is merely because the *earth* is the common mother of all terrestrial productions, that her name is feminine, it will be difficult to assign a sufficient reason, why the *sea* should not also be feminine; since it is probable, that as many animals and vegetables may be produced in the sea, as on the land. Its deep voice and boisterous nature entitle it (according to Mr. Harris) to a masculine name: but in Virgil, the fury *Alecto*, who was a female, and sufficiently turbulent, utters a more terrifick yell than ever proceeded from the most tempestuous ocean †. Catullus and Ovid mention the sea as a female, by the name *Amphitrite* ‡. And the common people of Scotland, when expressing the sea by a pronoun, often call it *She*, but I think never *He*: “Let us go and look at the sea; they say *she* is very rough to-day.”

† Virg. *Æneid*. vii. 514.—The common Greek name for the sea is feminine. *Ωκεανος* and *Θαλασσα* are not synonymous; at least they did not appear so to Homer; who uses the former to signify the Great Deep, Ocean, or Source of waters; from which every sea, (*πᾶσα θαλασσα*) fountain, and river, takes its rise.

—βαθυρρίταο μίγα σθίνε; Ωκεανῶ,
 Ἐκ θυγερ πάντες ποταμοί, καὶ πᾶσα θαλάττα,
 Καὶ πᾶσαι κρηταί, καὶ φρεῖατα μακρὰ γαῖαν.

Iliad. xxi. 195.

‡ Catull. de nupt. Pel. et Thet. vers. 11. Ovid. *Metamorph.* i. 14.

It

It seems to us quite natural, that a ship should be feminine; because, as the learned author of *Hermes* observes, it is so eminently a receiver and container of various things, of men, arms, provisions, and goods. Accordingly *naus* in Greek and *navis* in Latin are feminine; and English sailors, speaking of their vessel, say, *She* is under sail: nay, those very persons who call a war-ship a *man of war*, do still adhere to the same idiom, and say, The man of war sent out *her* boats. And yet, the French word for *ship*, *navire*, though derived from the Latin, is masculine.

It were vain to attempt to reduce these peculiarities to general principles. Real animals, when spoken of with a view to their sex, will no doubt in every country have names of that gender which befits their nature. But allegories are fantastick things; and genders, that have no better foundation, cannot be expected to be uniform in different countries. And those imaginary beings, who are idolized by ignorant nations, may to a capricious fancy appear in such a variety of lights, that it shall be impossible for a stranger, from what he may know of their supposed attributes, to determine any thing *a priori* concerning the gender, which custom may in any particular country annex to their names. We have heard both of a god and of a goddess of war: and who will say, that Bel-lona

lona is not as proper a name as Mars, for that imaginary demon? The god of strength, one would think, must be male; and this may be given as one reason for the gender of Hercules. And yet Necessity, who must be stronger than Hercules, and all the heaven gods put together, is represented by Horace as a female personage*; for no other reason, that I can guess, but because her name in Latin happens to have a feminine termination. It is natural, one may say, that the power who is supposed to preside over love should be beautiful and feminine: and yet the Romans ascribed this passion as much to the influence of a wicked little Boy, whom Virgil calls *Amor* and *Cupido*, as to that of his mother Venus. The charioteer of the sun was Phebus, according to the classics: but a Saxon poet would undoubtedly have preferred a female to that high office.

As things which have not animal life cannot with propriety be said to have sex, (for the sexual arrangement of vegetables is a modern discovery, hinted at indeed by Aristotle †, but unknown to the authors of language) it would seem most natural, that the names of all inanimate things and abstract ideas should be of the *neuter* gender; that is, should imply, that the things they stand for

* Hor. Od. i. 35. vers. 17.

† De Generat. Animal. lib. i. cap. 1.

are of *neither* sex. And in some languages this is no doubt the case. But in Greek and Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish, many nouns denoting abstract ideas, and things without life, are masculine, and many are feminine. The only good reason to be given for this is, that certain words are considered as of certain genders, on account of their final letters; because accident and custom have so determined. But, if it be asked, why in Latin (for example) the termination *a* of the first declension should be feminine, and of the third neuter; or why in either it should be feminine or neuter, and not masculine; I know of no reason, but what has been already assigned, namely, that in the Latin tongue such is the rule, as established by custom:—by Custom, I say, which in all human affairs has great authority, but which in giving laws to language is absolute and irresistible*.—It may be said, indeed, that, while a people and their language are in a rude state, and before men think of making grammars, it may be natural to say *bonæ pennæ* (for instance), and *bonam pennam*, on account of the similar sound. There may be something in this. But it goes not far in accounting for the fact I speak of. For, to be according to rule, the termination of the adjective and participle must *often differ* from that of the corresponding noun: *splendidum diadema*, *plurimus ignis*, *pii vates*, *res tranquillæ*, being as much

* See Horat. Art. Poet. vers. 71, 72.

accord-

according to rule, as *ingenium bonum*, *viro bono*, *antennarum velatarum*.

In English, *most* names of things without sex *are*, and all of them *may be*, neuter. We may say, speaking of the sun, either that *he* was, or that *it* was, eclipsed; and, of a ship, that *it* was wrecked, or that *she* was. But, in all the other languages I know, the gender of most substantives is fixed. And, even in English, when speaking of things inanimate, or of things without sex, we cannot make that masculine, which custom has made feminine, nor that feminine which custom has made masculine, though we may make either one or the other neuter. Of the sun I may say, *he* is set, or *it* is set, but I cannot say, *she* is set; and of the moon, that *she* is changed, or that *it* is changed, but not that *he* is changed. In like manner, speaking of the human soul, I may say, that *it* does not think always, or that *she* does not think always, but I cannot say, that *he* does not think always.

In strict propriety of speech, all English nouns, denoting what is without life, ought to be neuter: and when we make them masculine or feminine, it must be understood to be by the figure called Personification. And it is no doubt an advantage in our tongue, and (as a very learned * author remarks)

* Harris's Hermes.

serves to distinguish our logical or philosophical style from the poetical or rhetorical, that we may always speak of what is without life, either as a *thing*, in the neuter, or, as a *person*, in the masculine or feminine, as best suits our purpose. For this cannot be done so easily in other languages; at least it cannot be done, so as to mark the figure, or the want of it, by a variation of the gender. In Latin, Greek, and French, for example, *virtue* is always feminine: but, in English, we may, as we please, make it either feminine or neuter; and say, with equal propriety, Virtue shall receive *her* reward, (where we speak of Virtue poetically, or rhetorically, as a person), or, Virtue shall receive *its* reward, where we speak of it with more philosophical exactness.

In old English authors, I find *his* sometimes used, where we now use *its*. Thus, in Leviticus, we read of "the brazen altar, and "*his* grate of brass, *his* staves, and all *his* vessels." Hence I was once led to think, that this sort of substantives, though neuter in modern English, were sometimes in our antient language masculine. But it was a mistake. For in the first chapter of Genesis we have the following words; and similar phrases there are in other parts of Scripture. "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit, after *his* kind whose seed is in *itself*."

"*self*." * Now, if the noun *fruit-tree* had been considered as masculine by our translators, the sentence would have run thus:—"the fruit-tree yielding fruit after *his* kind, whose seed is in *himself*." But as they apply to one and the same substantive, first the pronoun *his*, and then the pronoun *itself*, I infer, not that the substantive was then both masculine and neuter, but, that the pronoun *his* was then used as a possessive, in speaking of neuter substantives, though it is now invariably applied to such as are masculine. †

From

* So in the third part of the Church's homily *against peril of Idolatrie*, "What can an image, which when it is fallen cannot rise again, which can neither help *his* friends, nor hurt *his* enemies, express of the most mighty God!"

† Dr. Campbell has fully explained this matter, by observing, with his usual accuracy, that the word *its* is not to be found in our Bible: whence we may infer, that, in the old language, it was not used, at least in solemn style. See *The Philosophy of Rhetorick*, vol. ii. p. 394. Instead of that word, we have always, in the common Translation, either *his* (as in the passages quoted) or a periphrasis, as *the path thereof*, for *its path*. *Itself*, indeed, occurs: but, in the old editions, is printed *it self*, in two words, and, therefore, is to be considered as compounded, not of *its* and *self*, but of *it* and *self*. And this is the real origin of that reciprocal pronoun. *Self* in old English means *same*. So Shakspeare,

Shoot another arrow that *self* way
Which you did shoot the first. *Merchant of Venice*.

L

And

From these remarks it will appear, how far the genders of nouns are fixed by the nature of things, and how far they depend on custom.—And so much for *Substantives*, or *Nouns*; a sort of words, that must of necessity be in all languages whatsoever.

And so Dryden; who, like Homer, Ennius, Virgil, and other great poets, often affects the antique,

At that *self* moment enters Palamon.

Knight's Tale.

Himself, therefore, *itself*, *myself*, *thyself*, &c. did probably denote, according to etymology, *the same him*, *the same it*, *the same me*, *the same thee*, &c.

S E C T. II.

*The nature and use of Nouns Secondary, or
Pronouns.*

THE words now to be considered do not form a numerous class; nor are they, perhaps, so essential to human speech as the former: but they are so convenient, that we have no reason to think there is any language without them. They are called by the Greeks * *Antónumiai*, and by the Latins *Pronomina*. And the name well expresses their nature; they being put † *anti tou onomatos, pro nomine*, instead of the noun or name. Their use, and the occasion of introducing them into language, may be thus illustrated.

Suppose me to meet with a person, whose name I know not, and to whom I am equally unknown; and that we find it necessary to talk together. I want to give some information concerning myself, and to address that information to him. But how is this to be done? He knows not my name, and I know not his. I might point to myself, when I meant to speak of myself, and to him when I would speak of him; but this would be inconvenient in the dark, and awkward in any

* *Antónumiai.*

† *anti tou onomatos.*

circumstances. Shall I begin with informing him of my name, and myself of his; and afterwards repeat my own name when I speak of myself, and his when I speak of him? Perhaps he might not choose to tell me his name, and I might be equally shy in regard to mine. But suppose this difficulty got over, and that I want to ask him the road. If I confine myself to proper and substantive names, I say, "James begs as a favour of Alexander, that Alexander would inform James, which is the road to such a place:" and, all the while, I must be pointing to myself and to him alternately, to signify, that I was speaking of him and of myself, and not of any other persons of the same names. If in so short and simple an address there is so much difficulty, it may well be imagined, that in a continued dialogue there would be a great deal more*.

Now for removing these difficulties there is a method very easy, and, I think, obvious enough to any rational being. Instead of the two proper names, substitute two pronouns, *I* and *You*; and there is no need either of knowing one another's names, or of pointing.

* Many questions might indeed be put, without either the knowledge of names, or the use of pronouns. In the case supposed, I might be well enough understood by asking simply, Which is the road? But speakers in ordinary conversation continually refer to, and address, one another; and if they had no words to mark such reference, the whole would be ambiguity and confusion.

" I beg

" I beg as a favour of *You*, that *you* would tell *me*, which is the road." Here, then, we see in part the origin, the nature, and the use, of Pronouns. They are the substitutes of proper names. This is the first and simplest idea of them; but it is not a complete one.

Further: Suppose two persons to be talking of a third person, whose name they either know not, or do not care to be continually repeating: it is evident, that the easiest way of managing such a conversation would be to adopt a pronoun, such as *he* and *him*. " I did not see Alexander to-day, but Alexander sent word, that Alexander would do Alexander the favour to call at my house in the evening:"—is not this more complex, and less intelligible, than if I were to say, " I did not see Alexander to-day, but *he* sent word, that *he* would do *himself* the favour to call at my house?"

These three Pronouns, *I*, *Thou*, and *He*, are called in our grammars the pronouns of the *first*, *second*, and *third person*. For it is said, that the speaker, who denotes himself by the pronoun *I*, is the chief person with regard to his own discourse. It should rather be said, that he is the person, whom we first attend to; for we naturally turn our eyes, and incline our ears, to the person who speaks. He who is spoken to, and whom the speaker addresses, by the pronoun *thou* or *you*,

you, is the next who draws our attention. And the person or thing spoken of, expressed by *he* or *it*, is, in contradistinction to the other two, called the *third* person.

That the use of pronouns may be considered as posteriour in time to that of nouns, and a kind of refinement upon it, appears from a fact, which every body must have observed, that when a child begins to speak, and knows his own name, he is apt to use it in speaking of himself; and it requires some pains, or some practice at least, to teach him how to supply its place by the pronouns of the first person *I*, and *Me*.

If it be asked, whether pronouns, like the nouns they represent, must admit the distinction of unity and plurality, the answer is obviously, yes. For one or more persons may speak, or one may speak the sentiment of many; and to one or to more persons our speech may be addressed; and the persons or things spoken of may be either one or many. And therefore *I* must have a plural *we*; *thou* must have *ye* or *you*; and *he* or *it* must have *they*. And the same analogy must take place in all languages.

The Greeks and Romans, in addressing one person, used the singular of the pronoun, *thou*; whereas we, and many other modern nations, use the plural *you*. But in very solemn style, as when we invoke the
supreme

Supreme Being, we use *Thou*: and, what is remarkable, we sometimes use the same form of the pronoun in contemptuous or very familiar language. This last mode of speech the French, who have it as well as we, express by the verb *tutoyer*; and Shakespeare makes *thou* a verb of the same import: "If thou *thouest* him three or four times it will not be amiss:" that is, if thou addressest him by the contemptuous or familiar appellation of *Thou*.—The people called Quakers profess, in imitation of the scripture style, to use *thou* on all occasions, when speaking to one person; but many of them ungrammatically put the oblique case *thee* in its place.

In the Latin tongue, it is a rule, when the pronouns of the first and second person are joined by the copulative, to give precedency to the former, and say, *Ego et Tu*; but we use a contrary arrangement, *You and I*; for it would look like arrogance if one were to say in English, *I and You*. One English author, indeed, has, in a certain controversial treatise, said, not only, "I and Doctor such-a-one," (naming his opponent), but also, "I and the Publick:" but it is a singularity, in which I believe he will not be imitated. Cardinal Wolsey was blamed for writing in one of his letters, *Ego et Rex meus*, I and my king; for this, though agreeable to the idiom of the language in which he wrote, is so repugnant to our manners, that it was thought

nothing but the most extravagant vanity could have induced him to adopt it.

It is difficult to prescribe laws to ceremony. A Spaniard, out of respect, walks before you out of his house; to intimate, that he has such confidence in you, that he could leave it in your possession: we, out of respect, make our friend walk out of our house before us; to intimate, that we account him the better man. The customs are contrary, though they proceed from the same principle.

A King, exerting his authority on a solemn occasion, adopts the plural of the first person, "*We* strictly command and charge:" meaning, that he acts by the advice of counsellors, or rather, that he is the representative of a whole people. The same form of speech was frequent in the mouth of an old Roman, though a private man: and, in allusion to the Classick idiom, English authors do sometimes, in speaking of themselves, say *We* and *Us*, instead of *I* and *Me*; but of late (except when several writers are supposed to be concerned in the same work) it has been thought more elegant, because it is become more fashionable, at least in serious composition, to use those pronouns in the singular.—It appears, then, that though the three pronouns in question are necessary in all languages, the modes of applying them are not in all nations uniform.

Those

Those of the first and second persons have no distinction of gender in any language I know *; nor is it necessary they should. For persons conversing together must know one another's sex from the voice, dress, and other circumstances; and therefore it is not more requisite that their words should imply it, than that my friend, every time he speaks to me, should tell me his name. *I* and *You*, therefore, *ego* and *tu*, belong to both sexes indifferently, and are masculine or feminine, according to the sex of the persons whose names they stand for. Thus a man would say, *Ego sum ille quem quæris*, I am he whom you seek; but a woman would say, *Ego sum illa quam quæris*, I am she whom you seek. The pronoun *ego*, *I*, is the same in both sentences: the other words, that admit of such variation, assume the gender of the speaker.

The pronoun of the third person must have the distinction of gender. It represents that which is the subject of the conversation; the gender whereof, if it be absent, cannot be known to the hearer, unless notified by the words that are spoken. If the subject of conversation be a man, the pronoun that stands for it must be masculine; if a woman, it must be feminine;

* In Hebrew, the pronoun of the second person has the distinction of gender. But this cannot be necessary in language, because it is particular.

if a thing, it may be neuter, unless the custom of the language determine otherwise. So that in language it would seem necessary, or at least convenient, that there should be three pronouns of the third person, answering to *he, she, it*; *ille, illa, illud*; *ekeinos, ekeinê, ekeino*.

The necessity, or the utility, of this, will be still more apparent, (as Mr. Harris ingeniously observes) if we suppose it wanting. Suppose then, that in English there is no other pronoun of the third person but *he* and *him*; and that, in an account of Adam and Eve and the forbidden fruit, we read thus, "*He* prevailed on *him* to eat *him*;" it is plain, that from these words we should not know what was eaten, who did eat, or who advised to eat. But let the genders of the pronoun be distinguished, "*She* prevailed on *him* to eat *it*;" and all ambiguity vanishes.

Further: the thing or person spoken of, which is notified by the pronoun of the third person, may bear various relations to the speakers, as well as to other things: it may be near, or distant, present or absent, belonging to the speaker, or to the hearer, or to some other person, &c. Hence it will be convenient to have a variety of pronouns expressive of the third person under these various relations; as *this, that, mine, thine, his, hers, theirs, ours, &c.*—But observe, that these

these words are not of the nature of pronouns, except when they supply the place of a noun; which is not always the case. They are pronouns, when we say, "Give me *that*" (pointing to it)—"I will keep *this*." When they do not supply the place of a noun; but are joined to a noun, in order to ascertain or define it, they belong to a class of words, to be considered hereafter, and may be called pronominal *articles*; as in these examples: *this man* I esteem; *that man* I admire; *your stature* is tall; *my health* is bad, &c.

The person who speaks, and the person who is spoken to, may either of them be the subject of conversation; as "*I* am *he* who sent you a letter yesterday. *You* are the *man* I was looking for;"—so that the pronouns of the first and second person may coincide with the third: but with one another they cannot; for, to say, *I* am *thou*, or, *thou* art *I*, would not be sense in any language, because it implies a confusion of persons, and that a man is not himself, but some other man.

The pronouns of the first and second person differ also in another respect from those of the third. *I* and *Thou*, *We* and *Ye*, *Us* and *You*, *Me* and *Thee*, point out the persons whose names they stand for, and are therefore understood even when nothing previous has been said. But *He*, *She*, *It*, &c. are
terms

terms of universal application; and cannot be understood, unless they are referred to something that went before, or is to come after, in the discourse. If I say, "I am hungry," or, "Thou art good," the person signified by the pronoun is known to be no other than myself the speaker, or him or her to whom I address myself; and this is equally known, whether I have said any thing previous or not. But if I begin a subject by saying, "*He* is wise, *She* is fair, I want *them*," I am not understood, till I say expressly, what the persons or the things are, to which I allude.

The divisions of pronouns into Primitive and Derivative, and into Demonstrative, Reciprocal, Interrogative, Possessive, &c. may be found in any common grammar; and therefore I shall say nothing of them in this place. But there is one division of Pronouns, which must not be overlooked, because it leads to some remarks of a more general nature.

All the pronouns hitherto mentioned may introduce a sentence, and are therefore called *Propositive*. But there is also a *Subjunctive* pronoun; the nature of which I shall illustrate by an example similar to that which Mr. Harris has given.

If I say, "The magnet is a stone: The magnet attracts iron," I utter two sentences,

tences, that are distinct and perfectly independent; for either may be understood without the other. If instead of the noun *magnet* in the second sentence I put the pronoun *it*, and say, "The magnet is a stone: it attracts iron;" the two sentences are still distinct in syntax, but in meaning not independent; for, to find the sense of *it* in the last, you must look to what went before, which informs you, that *magnet* is the noun whose place is supplied by that pronoun. Now it is easy to join these two sentences into one, by means of the copulative conjunction, "The magnet is a stone, and it attracts iron." Remove the words *and it*, and in their stead insert the pronoun *which* or *that*: "The magnet is a stone, *which* attracts iron;" and you form one sentence of the same meaning, and somewhat more concise than the other. This word *which* is the subjunctive pronoun I speak of. It expresses the united powers of the copulative conjunction *and*, and of the prepositive pronoun *it*: and herein consists its character. When it relates to a rational being, it commonly assumes, in modern English, the form *who* or *that*; and *which*, or *that*, when it alludes to things irrational or inanimate. In old English, *which* is often used where in modern English we should say *who*; as in the first clause of the Lord's prayer.* It is sometimes

* Some clergymen, to show their extreme delicacy, read "Our Father, *who* art in heaven." But if nothing will

times omitted in colloquial style, as in this example, "The person you speak of is not "the person I mean." The correspondent pronoun in Greek is * *hos* and *hostis*; in Latin, *qui*, *quæ*, *quod*.

But I will not affirm, that this subjunctive pronoun is either so necessary, or so frequent, in all languages, as in those which are most familiar to us. Being framed for the purpose of subjoining one sentence to another, and consequently of making one complex sentence of two or more simple sentences, it is evident, that if we could be satisfied with expressing ourselves in short sentences, this pronoun might in many cases be wanted. And it is observable, that illiterate persons and children rarely use it; joining their short periods, where they choose to join them, by the connective *and*; which is indeed a simpler and more obvious expedient. In some very antient languages, too, as the Hebrew, which

will please them, but what is modern, why do they not also change *pardoneth* and *absolveth* into *pardons* and *absolves*, *ghost* into *spirit*, *world without end* into *through all eternity*, and all the other old words and terminations into new ones? These old modes of language, in writings consecrated to religious use, should never be altered, till they become unintelligible, or ludicrous, or likely to occasion a mistake of the sense.—Virgil, Sallust, and Quintilian knew, and all good writers and critics are sensible, that old words judiciously applied give an air of grandeur to certain kinds of composition, and that familiar expressions have often an effect directly contrary.

• *es—etis.*

have

have been employed chiefly for expressing plain sentiments in the plainest manner, without aiming at any elaborate length or harmony of periods, this pronoun occurs not so often, as in Greek and Latin, and those other tongues, which have been embellished by the joint labours of the philosopher and rhetorician. Read the first chapter of Genesis: and you will find that the subjunctive pronoun occurs but seldom; the sentences being short, particularly towards the beginning, and joined for the most part by the connective. And the same simplicity of composition is frequent in Scripture, especially in the historical parts; which in that Divine book is a great beauty, and an evidence both of its truth, and of its antiquity. For had the diction been more elaborate, it would have had too much the air of human contrivance, and of the arts of latter times. But in other compositions, the same unadorned simplicity would not always be agreeable. For we are not displeased to find human decorations in a work of human art. Besides, the sentiments of inspiration support themselves by their intrinsic dignity; whereas those of men must often be supported and recommended by the graces of language. The inspired author commands our attention, and has a right to it; but other writers must flatter and amuse, in order to prevail with us to attend.—But this by the by. I only meant to say, that complex sentences,
which

which without the subjunctive pronoun could not easily be framed, may be so contrived and disposed, as to contribute not a little to the beauty of human compositions: though in writings of a higher order we neither expect nor desire them; because we know, that, however pleasing, they are but human contrivances at the best. The same ornaments are unseemly in a temple, which we admire in a private apartment; and that rhetorical art, which in Virgil and Cicero is so charming, would be quite unsuitable to the majesty of Scripture.

The subjunctive pronoun may join two sentences so closely, that to a superficial observer they shall seem to be but one. What can be more clearly one sentence, than the following, "The man whom you see is Peter?" Is it possible, one might say, to analyse it into two? Nothing more easy. Here are two distinct affirmations; and here, therefore, may be two sentences. "You see a man. That man is Peter." Both these are comprehended in the abovementioned proposition; and these two taken together express its full meaning. It is, therefore, not a simple, but a compound sentence. In fact, wherever there is a subjunctive pronoun, there must be the import of both a pronoun, and a copulative conjunction: and all conjunctions connect sentences, as will be seen hereafter.

CHAP. II.
OF ATTRIBUTIVES.

SECT. I.

Of Attributives — Adjectives, Participles, Verbs.—Their distinguishing characters.—Comparison of Adjectives.

THE words hitherto considered have been called by some writers Primary and Secondary Substantives. Both classes denote substances or things; the former, directly; the latter, by supplying the place of the former.

But by nouns and pronouns alone not one human sentiment could be expressed. There must, therefore, in all languages, be other classes of words. Men not only speak of persons and things, but also of the qualities, characters, and operations, of persons and things. What would it signify to speak of Cesar, if one were never to say whether Cesar was good or bad, or what were his qualities, or what his actions?

If we were to hear such an expression as,
—*was brave—was admired—invaded Britain,*
we should naturally ask, *who* was so? and,

M

who

who did so? for till we be informed of this, we cannot know what is meant. Not that the words *brave, admired, invaded*, have no meaning; but because they denote certain qualities or attributes, which lead our thoughts to the person or thing to whom they are supposed to belong. For qualities imply something in which they inhere, or to which they pertain: and if there were no persons or things in the universe, there could be no qualities or attributes. Now the words that denote attributes or qualities are in general called *Attributives*.

The antient Greek Grammmarians called them * *rhémata, verba, verbs*: — whatever may be said, or, more accurately, whatever may be affirmed, or denied, concerning any thing or person. Thus of *Cesar*, it may be affirmed, that he was *brave*, that he was *admired*, that he *invaded Britain*; and of the same *Cesar*, it may be denied, that he was *cruel*, that he was *despised*, that he *conquered Britain*. In these affirmations and negations, *Cesar* is a substantive, name, or noun; *he* is a pronoun; and *brave, cruel, admired, despised, invaded, conquered*, are attributives.

In all the languages we know, and probably in all others, there are three sorts of attributives, which are called in the grammars, *Adjectives, Participles, and Verbs*.—

* *ῥήματα*.

The Adjective denotes a simple quality, as brave, cruel, good, swift, round, square.—The Participle is said to denote a quality, together with a certain modification of time; as *amans*, loving, which relates to time present; *amatus*, loved, which alludes to time past; and *amaturus*, about to love, which points at time future *.—The Verb is still more complex than the participle. It not only expresses an attribute, and refers that attribute to time, past, present, or to come; but also comprehends an assertion; so that it may form, when joined to a noun, a complete sentence, or proposition. Thus when I say, *Alexander ambulat*, Alexander walks, I utter, though in two words, a complete sentence: and this sentence comprehends in it these four things: first, a substantive proper name, *Alexander*; secondly, an attribute, quality, or operation of Alexander, *walking*; thirdly, this quality or operation fixed down to the present time, *walks*, or *is walking*; and fourthly, this quality as affirmed to belong to the person spoken of, *Alexander is walking*.

From the verb take away the assertion, and there remains the attribute and the time, which are commonly thought to form the

* This idea of the Participle may suffice at present; having been generally adopted by Grammarians. But it is not accurate; nay it is very inaccurate. See the fifth section of this chapter.

essence of the participle; and from the participle take away the time, and there remains the simple quality, as expressed by the adjective. Thus from *amat*, the verb, *loveth*, or *is loving*, take away the assertion *is*, and there remains *loving*, which is called a participle of the present time: and if we consider the attributive *loving*, not as bearing reference to the present or to any particular time, but as expressing a person's general character which remains with him at all times, we transform it into an adjective; as when we say, a *loving* parent, a *sympathising* friend, *Aristides fuit amantissimus æqui. Doctus, Spectatus, Probatu*s, and many other attributives of the same nature, are participles, when they imply any notion of time; but adjectives, when they denote a quality simply, without regard to time.

All substances, natural, imaginary, artificial, and abstract, and all persons; and, in a word, whatever is expressed by a substantive, may be characterised by qualities, and, consequently, joined in syntax to adjectives, to participles, and to verbs. We may say, a *tall man*, a *rising man*, a *man speaks or runs*; a *mournful muse*, an *inspiring muse*, the *muse inspires or sings*; a *swift ship*, a *lost ship*, the *ship overtakes the enemy*: of *virtue* we may say, that it is *lovely*, that it is *praised*, that it *brings happiness*; and, of *Socrates*, that he was *wise*, that he was *condemned*,

demned, and that *he drank* poison. Pronouns, too, as they stand for nouns, may be characterised in the same manner; as in the two last examples.

From the method of arrangement commonly followed in grammars, we might be apt to conclude, that adjectives are of the same class with nouns, and that the participle is a part of the verb. But when we examine these classes of words philosophically, that is, according to their meaning and use, and without regard to their derivations, or final letters, we shall be satisfied, that the arrangement here given is right, and that the other, though not materially wrong, is however erroneous. In their nature, no two sorts of words can be more unlike, than the substantive and the adjective; and therefore it must be a fault in distribution, to refer both to the Noun. The Substantive is the name of the thing spoken of, and in Greek and Latin is called *name*, for it is *onoma* in the one, and *nomen* in the other; and it would have been better, if in English we had called it *the name*, rather than *the noun*; for this last word, being used only in grammar, we are more apt to misunderstand, than the other, which is in familiar use. But the adjective is not the name either of a thing or of a person; nor is it a name at all: it denotes a quality; and the Greeks called it, not *onoma*, but *epitheton* or epithet,

thet, and sometimes rhêma; which last word means whatever is affirmed or denied of a thing or person. It is true, the term *rhêma* does not distinguish it from the verb and participle; but then it does not confound it with the noun or substantive. And in fact, the adjective or epithet partakes more of the verb and participle, than of the noun. So that, if there be any reason for distinguishing the noun from the verb, there is equal reason for distinguishing the noun from the adjective: and the term *adjective-noun*, however common, is really as incongruous, as *verb-noun* or *participle-noun* would be.

The reason, why grammarians have confounded the adjective with the noun, seems to be, because in Greek and Latin both are declined by cases, resemble each other in termination, and, when joined in syntax, agree in case, gender, and number. But this is no good reason. If it were, participles also should be called nouns: which in no grammar, so far as I know, has ever been done.—Adjectives are sometimes called *ad-nouns*; which would seem not altogether improper, because they are joined to nouns; but is not accurate, because it does not distinguish the adjective from the participle and verb, which are also joined to nouns.*

The

* If adjectives may ever with propriety be called *ad-nouns*, it seems to be, when they are necessary to give the

The Participle, *Participium*, (in Greek * *metochê*) was probably so called, because it *partakes* of the nature both of the verb and of the adjective; of the former, by expressing time, and of the latter, by denoting a quality. But, though derived from the verb, it is not to be considered as a part of it; because, though it may resemble a verb in expressing a quality with time, it implies no affirmation, and consequently wants the verb's distinguishing character. If its derivation were to give it any right to be considered as a part of the verb, then the adverb *presumptuously* might as well claim to be a part of the adjective *presumptuous*, of the noun *presumption*, and of the verb *presume*. Accordingly, the Latin grammarians, while they confound adjectives with nouns, do yet very properly distinguish the participle from every other part of speech.

Wherever adjectives and participles admit the distinctions of gender, number, and case, it would seem natural, that, in these three respects, they should agree with the

full signification of a noun. Thus the *golden eagle* is no more than the *name* of one species of the *aquiline* tribe. Accordingly, what in one tongue is thus expressed by two words may in another be signified by one. Thus *χρυσάετος* is the name of the same bird in Greek. Similar instances are innumerable; as the *Mediterranean sea*, a *setting dog*, &c. See *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*. Book iii. chap. 2.

* *Μετοχή*, from *μετέχω* participare.

nouns to which they belong. Indeed, I cannot see, why adjectives and participles should have those distinctions, unless it be, that they may the more effectually coincide with their respective nouns. For *bonus, movens, good, moving*, or any other adjective or participle, considered in itself, cannot be of any number or of any gender: for it may be asserted of one, or of many; and of that which is either masculine or feminine, and of that which is neuter. Twelve men or women, for example, may be *good*, or *in motion*, as well as one; and many sorts of animals, and inanimate things, as well as one sort.—Agreeably to these remarks, we find, that in Latin, Greek, and some other languages, wherein the termination of adjectives and participles varies according to the gender and number;—that in those languages, I say, adjectives and participles follow the gender, number, and case of the substantives to which they are joined: but English adjectives and participles, which never vary the termination, and are all of the nature of indeclinable Latin adjectives (as *frugi, nequam, centum*) adapt themselves, without any change, to nouns of all genders, cases, and numbers.—Whence we may infer, that the declension of adjectives and participles, though it takes place in many tongues, and may contribute to elegance and harmony of style, is not essential to language, and is therefore a consideration which belongs not

to Universal Grammar. And it will appear afterwards, that the same thing is true of the declension of nouns.

The *comparison* of adjectives is another source of variety, which demands attention; that we may see how far it is, or is not, essential to language.—Things or persons, that have a certain quality in common, may differ in respect of the *degrees* in which they have it. This paper is white, and snow is white; but snow is *whiter* than this paper. Pliny was eloquent, Cesar was more eloquent, and Cicero was the most eloquent of the three. Sophocles was wise, Socrates was wiser; but Solomon was the wisest of men. These, and the like degrees, of the same quality, must be observable in all ages and nations, must be spoken of by all men, and must therefore in one way or other be expressed in all languages.

In Latin and English, there are four ways of expressing this variety. The first is, by joining to the adjective an adverb of comparative increase; as *more* hard, *very* hard, *most* hard; *magis durus*, *valde durus*, *maxime durus*.—The second is, by varying the termination of the adjective: *wise*, *wiser*, *wisest*; *sapiens*, *sapientior*, *sapientissimus*; * *sophos*, *sophóteros*, *sophótatos*.—The third is, by assuming other adjectives, which do themselves

* σοφός, σοφώτερος, σοφώτατος.

denote both a quality and comparison ; as *good, better ; bad, worse ; bonus, melior, optimus*.—The fourth is, by blending the two methods last mentioned : as in English, *good, better, best* ; where *best* (contracted from the Saxon *Betteſt* or *Betſt*) is plainly allied to *better*, but *better* (though formed from the Saxon *Bet*) is, in English, a primitive word, not derived from *good*, nor from any other adjective now in the language. So in Latin, *malus, pejor, pessimus* ; and so in Greek * *kakos, cheirôn, cheiristos*.—In other tongues, other methods equally convenient, perhaps, and equally elegant, may have been adopted, for marking those increasing degrees of qualities, which are commonly called *degrees of comparison*.

As many verbs either denote, or imply action ; and as the same action may be performed with greater or with less energy ; it seems reasonable, that they, as well as adjectives, should admit of increase or of decrease in their signification ; which is probably the case in all languages. But in every language that we know, it is done by means of adverbs, and not by varying the termination of the verb : for this would have added unnecessarily to the complexness of that attributive, which in most languages is complex enough already. Thus we say in Eng-

* *κακός, χειρόν, χειρίστος.*

lish, Brutus loved money *much*, Cato loved it *more*, Crassus loved it *exceedingly*. So in Latin, *amat, magis amat, vehementer amat*.

Such adverbs as express the meaning of attributives, may admit of comparison, if the attribute itself be capable of *more* and *less*. Thus *diu*, for a *long* time, is varied into *diutius* and *diutissime*; *stulte*, in a *foolish* manner, or foolishly, into *stultius* and *stultissime*; *prope*, in a *near* situation, into *propius*, and *proxime*, &c. So in English we say, adverbially, long, longer, very long; foolishly, more foolishly, most foolishly; near, nearer, nearest or next.

Those words admit not of comparison, which denote what is so definite as to be unsusceptible of *more* and *less*. Quality, says Aristotle, admits of more and less; but substance does not. If this be allowed, it follows, that substantives do not admit of comparison, but that attributives do. Goliath was *taller* and *stronger* than David; but David was as much a male of the human species as Goliath. If we say of any one, that he is *more a man* than another, we give to the noun the sense of an attributive; for the meaning must be, that he is *more manly*, or that he possesses some other good qualities in a higher degree. So when Pope says, of a certain person, that he is "a tradesman, meek, and *much a liar*," the last phrase is the same with *much given* to lying. And
when

when the Scripture declares, of the pharisee's profelyte, that he is *more a child of bell*, the meaning is, that he is *more liable* to punishment, because more wicked; and therefore, the words *a child of bell*, have the import of an adjective.

Pronouns, as they supply the place of nouns, must, like them, be incapable of comparison. It is true, we say in English the *very same*, and in Plautus we find *Ipsissimus* the superlative of *ipse* or *ipsus*. But these are redundancies. For *the same*, and *ipse*, express all that can be meant by *the very same*, and *ipsissimus*. Many such superfluities find their way into the language of conversation; but in solemn and elegant style it is better to avoid them.

Adjectives, whereof the meaning is already as extensive as it can be, as *omnis*, *cunctus*, *totus*, *universus*; and those that denote exact figure, or definite quantity or number, admit not of degrees of comparison, because they are unsusceptible of *more* and *less*. Seven grains of sand are as much and as really *seven*, as seven planets. My *two-foot* rule is as much a two-foot rule as yours. One circle cannot be *more circular* than another. We may say, however, that one *figure* is *more circular* than another *figure*. But in this example the adjective signifies, not exact figure, but *approaching to the figure of a circle*; and therefore, being, in respect of

of the figure, indefinite, is capable of more and less, and consequently of comparison.

How many *degrees* of comparison are there? Every school-boy can answer, Three; for three are mentioned by name in his grammar. How many parts are in an inch? A common joiner would perhaps answer, Eight, or Ten; for that is the number marked on his foot-rule. But if we consider this matter philosophically, we shall see reason to affirm, that the degrees of comparison are, like the parts of an inch, infinite in number, or at least indefinite.—A mountain is larger than a mite:—by how many degrees? How much bigger is the earth than a grain of sand? By how many degrees was Socrates wiser than Alcibiades? or Cleopatra more beautiful than Octavia? or Varro more learned than Cato? Or by how many degrees is snow whiter than this paper? It is plain, that to these and the like questions no *definite* answers can be returned.

In quantities, however, that may be *exactly* measured, the degrees of excess may be exactly ascertained, and definitely expressed. A foot is just twelve times as long as an inch; and a man seven feet high is double the height of one of forty-two inches. But in regard to *qualities*, and to those quantities which cannot be measured exactly, it is impossible to say how many degrees may be comprehended in the comparative excess.

But though these degrees be infinite or indefinite in fact, they cannot be so in language. Nor would it be convenient, if language were to express many of them. More need not be expressed than two; the first, to signify simple excess, which is commonly called the Comparative; and the other to denote very great excess, or the greatest, which has obtained the name of the Superlative.* As to the Positive degree of comparison, which grammarians talk of, it is nothing more than the simple form of the adjective, and implies not either comparison or degree. The reason, says Ruddiman, why it has been accounted one of the three degrees, is, because the other two are founded upon and formed from it.

But how is it possible by two words to express accurately the various degrees of more and less, in which the same attribute may appear in those things that we compare together? I answer, that, in measured quantities, and in qualities that may be ascertained by the application of quantity, this is easily done by means of numbers:—as, a foot is *twelve* times longer than an inch; an hour is *sixty* times longer than a minute; boiling water is *one hundred and sixteen* degrees hotter than the human blood.—In re-

* The expression here is too brief to be accurate; but it will be more fully explained by and by.

gard to unmeasured quantities and qualities, I answer, that the degrees of more and less may be expressed, intelligibly, at least, if not accurately, by adverbs, or words of like import :—as, Socrates was *much* wiser than Alcibiades ; Snow is *a great deal* whiter than this paper ; Epaminondas was *far* the most accomplished of the Thebans ; the evening-star is a glorious object, but the sun is *incomparably* more glorious ; the Deity is *infinitely* greater than the greatest of his creatures. The inaccuracy of these and the like expressions is not a material inconvenience ; and, though it were, it is unavoidable ; for human speech can only express human thought ; and where thought is necessarily inaccurate, language must be so too.

Sanctius, the author of a grammatical treatise called *Minerva*, maintains, that the Superlative degree does not imply comparison. But, though he was a learned man, I must differ from him in this, as in many other things ; and the less regard is due to his judgment, as he seems to have written with a view to establish paradoxes, and abuse the grammarians. To me the Superlative seems to be as really a comparative, as the Comparative itself. But that this may appear with full evidence, I must observe, that, in all the languages I know, and probably in all others, there are two Superlatives ; which, though similar in meaning, are different in
their

their use. The first may be called the superlative *of comparison*; the second, the superlative *of eminence*.

1. When I say, that Cato was *more learned* than Marius, and that Varro was *the most learned* of all the Romans; is not a comparison of Varro with other learned Romans as plainly implied in the last clause, as a comparison of Cato with Marius is in the first? For I would ask, whether one who had never known or heard of any other Roman could truly and rationally say, “that “no other Roman was so learned as Varro;” a sentiment, which is plainly signified when we say, that Varro was the most learned of all the people of Rome; and which no man (who had any regard to sense or truth) would entertain, or express, till after a comparison had actually been made. So in this example, “Socrates was wiser than any other Athenian, but Solomon was the wisest of men,” Socrates is compared with the Athenians, and Solomon with mankind in general.

What then, it may be said, if both imply comparison, is the difference between the Comparative and the Superlative? Is it, that the superlative always expresses a *greater excess* than the Comparative? No. Socrates was the *wisest* of the Athenians, but Solomon was *wiser* than Socrates:—here a higher superiority of wisdom is denoted by the comparative *wiser*, than by the superlative *wisest*.
—Is

—Is it, because the Superlative implies a comparison of *one with many*, while the comparative implies a comparison of *one with one*? No: this is not always the case neither. The Psalmist says, that “he is *wiser than all his teachers* ;” where, though the comparative is used, there is a comparison of *one with many*.—The real difference between these two degrees of comparison may be explained thus.

When we use the Superlative, it is in consequence of having compared individuals with the species to which they belong, or one or more species with the genus under which they are comprehended. Thus, *Socrates was the wisest of the Athenians* ; *the Athenians were the most learned of ancient nations* ; *Homer, Virgil, and Milton, are the greatest of poets* :—where observe, that Socrates, though compared with his countrymen, is at the same time considered as one of them ; that the Athenians, though compared with ancient nations, are considered as one of those nations ; and that Homer, Virgil, and Milton are considered as three individuals of that species of authors, with whom they are compared, and to whom it is affirmed that they are superiour. And hence, this superlative is in modern language followed by the preposition *of*, and in Greek and Latin by the genitive case of the plural ; to signify, that the object, which has the pre-

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eminence,

eminence, is considered as *belonging to that class* of things or persons, with which it is compared.

But, when we use the comparative degree, the objects compared are set in *direct opposition*, and the one is not considered as a part of the other, or as comprehended under it. If I say, "Cicero was more eloquent than the Romans," I speak absurdly; because every body knows, that of the class of men expressed by the word *Romans* Cicero was one: but when I say, that Cicero was more eloquent than all the *other* Romans, or than any *other* Roman, I speak not absurdly; because, though the persons spoken of were all of the same class or city, yet Cicero is here set in contradistinction to the rest of his countrymen, and is not considered as one of the persons with whom he is compared.—Moreover, if the Psalmist had said, "I am the wisest of my teachers," the phrase would have been improper, because implying that he was one of them: but when he says, "I am wiser than my teachers," he does not consider himself as one of them, but sets himself in contradistinction to them.—Again, "Solomon was the wisest of men:"—here Solomon is compared with a species of beings whereof he himself was one, and therefore the Superlative is used: but "Solomon was of men the wiser," is nonsense, (at least in English) because the use of the comparative

tive would imply, that *he* was set in opposition to *mankind*; which is so far from being the case, that he is expressly considered as one of them.

In English we cannot say, "he is the tallest of the two;" it must be, "the taller of the two:" nor do we say, "he is the taller of the three;" it must be "the tallest." But this does not hold universally in other languages. The Greeks sometimes have the superlative, where we should use the comparative. * *Outis allê dustuche-flatê gunê emou pepbuken*: "there is no other woman most wretched than I;" or, (to give the meaning in better English) "there is no other woman more superlatively wretched." They also use the comparative instead of the superlative. "And now abide (says the Apostle) Faith, Hope, Charity; these three; but the greater of these is Charity:" for the word in Greek is † *meizôn* and not ‡ *megistê*. Or we might render it thus: "And now abide Faith, Hope, Charity, these three; but greater than those (that is, than faith and hope) is charity." In like manner, it is said in the Gospel, that "a grain of mustard-seed is the smaller of all seeds; but when grown up, it is the greater of herbs." In both these places, our Translators have preserved

* *Outis allên dustuchestata gynê êmou pepbuken.* † *Μεζωτε-
ρ.*

the English idioms.—Some examples of the same kind may be found in Latin authors: but they are not frequent, either in Latin, or in Greek.

2. The other Superlative I took the liberty to call the superlative *of eminence*. It denotes very great excess or defect, but is not joined to any words that directly intimate comparison: as when we say, Cicero was a *very eloquent*, or a *most eloquent* man; St. Kilda is a *very small* island; a mouse is a *most diminutive* quadruped.

Yet even in this Superlative, it may be said, that something of comparison seems to be remotely or indirectly intimated; that, for example, when we say, "he is a very tall man," it must be understood, that we compare the person spoken of with other men, or his stature with the ordinary human stature. This is true; but yet we cannot affirm, that comparison is more clearly intimated in this superlative, than in the simple attributive *tall*; for when we say, "he is a tall man," we must be understood to make the same reference to the ordinary size of men. So when we say, "Solomon was a most wise, or a very wise man," we do indeed distinguish him from other men who were not so wise: but we mark a distinction of the same kind, though not the same in degree, when we say simply, that "Solomon was wise." Whereas, in the use of the former

former superlative, the comparison is direct and particular: for we not only express great superiority or inferiority, but also mention the persons or things that are superiour, as well as those that are inferiour.

In English, we distinguish these superlatives, by prefixing to the one the definite article *the*, subjoining the preposition *of* or *among*, with the name of the species or class of things compared; as "Solomon was the wisest of (or among) men: Hector was the most valiant of (or among) the Trojans." To the other superlative we only prefix the indefinite article *a*: "he was a very good man; he is a most valiant soldier." And observe, that our Superlative termination *est* is peculiar to the former: we may say "Homer was the sublimest, or the most sublime, of poets;" but we cannot say, "Homer was a sublimest poet;" it must be, "Homer was a most sublime, or a very sublime poet."—Now, in Italian, the rule is contrary; for the superlative termination denotes what I call the superlative of eminence, *Cicerone fu eloquentissimo*, Cicero was most eloquent, or very eloquent, or Cicero was a most eloquent man: and the superlative of comparison is expressed by the adverb *piu* or *more*, which, with the definite article *il* prefixed, assumes the signification of *most*; as *Cicerone fu il piu eloquente dei Romani*,

Cicero was the most eloquent of the Romans.

In a word, (that I may not take up more time with the peculiarities of individual tongues) different nations may have different contrivances for expressing these degrees of comparison; but in one way or other it seems necessary that they should be expressed in all languages.

In Hebrew, the comparison of adjectives is intimated, not by inflection, but by the aid of a preposition. Thus, in the comparative, "Wisdom is better than rubies," would be literally "Wisdom is good above rubies." In the superlative of comparison, "He is the best of them all," would be, "He is good above them all." And, for marking the superlative of eminence, they use adverbs corresponding to our *most*, *very*, &c. This method is extremely simple, and yet quite sufficient for the purpose.

As I have here mentioned the Hebrew, and shall have occasion to speak of it once and again in the sequel, I think it my duty to say, that for the little knowledge I have of the analogy of that language I am indebted to my amiable friend and colleague, Dr. Campbell; who in his *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, and other works, has given many proofs of elegance as a writer, and of uncommon penetra-

penetration as a philosopher and critick; and who will soon (I hope) make an important addition to the Theological Literature of his country, by a new version of the four Gospels, with explanatory notes and critical Dissertations: a work for which he is eminently qualified; not only by his natural talents and philological accuracy, but also by his comprehensive knowledge of the languages, and by that indefatigable zeal for religious truth, which has engaged him to make the study of the holy scriptures a great part of his daily employment for many years.

S E C T. II.

The Subject of Attributives continued. — Of Verbs; — their general nature investigated, and expressed in a definition. — Conjectures in regard to the Greek and Latin inflections.

THE Adjective denotes a simple quality : the Participle, a quality with time * : the Verb, a quality and time together with an assertion. This account was already given, to distinguish these attributives from one another. But Verbs being of all words the most complex and most curious, it will now be proper, to inquire more minutely into their nature ; and to show, from what modifications of human thought they derive their origin.

We are endowed, not only with senses to perceive, and with memory to retain ; but also with reason and judgment, whereby we attend to things, and compare them together, so as to perceive their characters and mutual relations. Thus I not only *perceive* the men whom I see to-day, and *remember* those whom I saw yesterday ; but also *form judgments* concerning them : and those judgments I express, when I say, that one is strong, another weak ;

* See the fifth section of this chapter.

one tall, another short; one young, another old; one good, another bad; one wise, another foolish, &c.

Take now any one of these judgments, and express it by itself; Solomon est sapiens, Solomon is wise. — Concerning these three words, I observe, first, that they form a sentence, or a complete enunciation of thought: secondly, that if the word *est*, *is*, were left out, the other two words, *Solomon wise*, or *wise Solomon*, would not form a sentence: thirdly, that a substance or object is here mentioned, *Solomon*, and a quality, *wise*; and that the one is *affirmed* to be the character of the other: and, fourthly, that if it were not for the word *est*, *is*, nothing would be affirmed of either the quality or the object; for *wise Solomon* or *Solomon wise* contain no affirmation. Now the word *is*, or *est*, is one of those words which are called *verbs*. — May we not then say, that “ it is the nature of a
“ verb, first, to express an affirmation; and,
“ secondly, to form, when united with a noun
“ and a quality, a complete sentence?”

Before I proceed, it may be necessary to remark, that a sentence comprehending a *thing*, a *quality*, and an *affirmation*, is in Logic called a *proposition*; of which, the thing spoken of is the *subject*; the quality, affirmed, or denied, to belong to the subject, is the *predicate*; and the word, or words, containing the affirmation or negation, are the *copula*.

Thus, in the last example, *Solomon* is the *subject* of the proposition; *is*, the *copula*; and *wise*, the *predicate*. Thus, in the following proposition, "To be just is commendable," *to be just* is the *subject*, or that concerning which the affirmation is made; *is*, the *copula*; and *commendable*, the *predicate*, or that which is affirmed of the subject.—Let it be further observed in this place, that every proposition is either affirmative, or negative; that is, affirms or asserts, that the predicate either *does agree* with the subject, or *does not agree* with it. When I say, "God is good," I pronounce an affirmative proposition: when I say, "Poverty is not criminal," I utter a negative proposition, wherein I affirm or assert, that *criminal* the predicate *does not agree* with *poverty* the subject. Every proposition, therefore, whether affirmative or negative, does still *imply* affirmation or assertion: for, to deny that a thing is, is to affirm that it is not; to say that "Pain *is not* good," is the same thing with saying, "that it *is* evil," or "that it *is* indiffer-ent."—Of propositions positively affirmative the verb alone is the copula; as "God is good:" such as are negatively affirmative have for their copula both the verb and the negative particle, as "Poverty *is not* criminal."—This being premised concerning propositions, I resume the subject of verbs.

I said,

I said, that a verb is "a species of word, which expresses an affirmation, and which may form, when united with a name and a quality, a complete sentence."—It may be worth while to consider, whether the latter clause of this definition does not comprehend the former; that is, whether every sort of *sentence* does not express or imply affirmation.

Sentences are of various kinds. A single word may convey the full import of a sentence. And this may happen in every part of speech; the article and conjunction excepted, which can never stand by themselves, because they have no meaning, unless when they are joined with other words.

First; a single noun may stand for a sentence, and imply an affirmation. One asks, "Is Virgil or Lucan the better poet?" I answer, "Virgil." And this word thus connected comprehends an entire affirmative sentence; "Virgil *is* the better poet."—Secondly, A pronoun may be a sentence. If it be asked, "Is he or she to blame?" and answered, *He*; this single pronoun is equivalent to the following affirmative proposition, "He *is* blameable."—Thirdly, An adjective may in its meaning be equally comprehensive. "Is the day good or bad?" says one. I answer, "Good;" which means, "the day *is* good."—Fourthly, the same thing holds true of the participle. "Is he
" running

“ running or walking ?” *Running*, may be the answer ; which being resolved amounts to “ *He is running.*”—Fifthly, A verb often comprehends a sentence, especially in the antient languages. *Albeo* ; that is, *Ego sum albus*, I *am* white : *Dormit* ; *Ille est dormiens* ; He *is* asleep.—Sixthly, An adverb may stand for an affirmative sentence. “ Are you sick ?” it is asked. I answer, *No* ; which is the same as if I had answered, negatively, “ I *am not* sick,” or, positively, “ I *am* well.”—Seventhly, An interjection often contains a sentence with affirmation ; as when one tells me a melancholy tale, and I only answer, “ *Alas !*” which implies, “ I *am* sorry.”—Eighthly, a preposition may be an affirmative sentence ; “ Was Virgil before Livy, or after ?” The answer is *Before* ; which is as truly an affirmative sentence in this connection, as if I had said “ *Virgil was* before Livy.”

Nay, even a conjunction, an article, or a letter, when taken *materially*, as the Grammarians say, that is, when put for itself, and not as the sign of any thing else, may in a certain connection amount to a complete affirmative sentence. “ *Is yet or nevertheless* the more common adversative conjunction ?” Answer ; *Yet* ; which implies, *Yet is* the more common.—“ What is the definite article in English ?” Answer ; *The* ; that is, *The is* the definite article.—“ What letter

“ letter in our language is most offensive to “ the ear of a foreigner ? ” Answer, S ; or S *is* the most offensive.—All the sentences hitherto specified do plainly imply an affirmation ; and that affirmation is expressed by *is* or *was*, or some other part of the verb *esse*, *to be*.

Moreover, Every sentence contains a verb expressed or understood ; and that verb must be in one or other of those forms, which Grammarians call *moods*. Now every mood has a particular meaning, and gives a peculiar character to the sentence : and, therefore, simple sentences may be divided into as many sorts, as there are supposed to be moods in a verb. I shall give an example of each ; and it will appear, that whatever be the mood of the verb, or the form of the sentence, there is still in every sentence an affirmation, or assertion, either expressed, or implied. First, “ He *is* good,” is an *indicative* and affirmative sentence : and the same thing may be said of “ He *is not* good ; ” which in a positive form may be expressed thus, “ He *is* evil.”—Secondly, “ I know not “ whether he be good,” *Nescio an bonus sit*, is a sentence, wherein the *subjunctive* mood is used ; and, if analysed, will appear to be an affirmative proposition to this purpose, “ That he is good (or, his goodness) *is* to me “ unknown.”—Thirdly, We use the mood called *Potential*, when we say, “ He may be “ good.”

“ good,” *Licet illi esse bono* ; or “ He ought to be good,” *Debet esse bonus* ; which are also affirmative sentences, and may be otherwise expressed, “ To be good *is* in his power,” and “ To be good *is* his duty.”—Fourthly, When we say, “ May he be good,” the mood is *optative* ; and the words comprehend the following affirmation, “ That he should be good *is* what I wish for.”—Fifthly, When I ask, “ Is he good ?” the mood is *interrogative* ; and the question may be resolved so as to have the same character with the foregoing propositions : “ It *is* my desire to be informed, whether he be good.”—Sixthly, “ Be thou good,” *Esto bonus*, which is the mood called *imperative*, implies also an affirmation to this purpose, “ It *is* my command, or it *is* my intreaty, that thou shouldst be good.”—These are the principal moods acknowledged by grammarians : how many of them may be *necessary* in language, will appear hereafter.—As to the *infinitive* mood, I shall show in another place, that it partakes more of the nature of an abstract noun, than of a verb ; for it denotes no affirmation, and only expresses the pure meaning of the attributive, abstracted from all considerations of number and person.

Having proved, more minutely than was needful, that every sentence may be made affirmative ; and it having been observed before,

fore, that, in order to express affirmation, a verb is necessary in every sentence; it remains, that a verb (according to the view we have hitherto taken of it) may be defined, "A word, necessary in every sentence, and signifying affirmation."

Now in all the sorts of sentences hitherto considered, the affirmation is, or may be, expressed by that verb, which the Latins call *substantive*, but the Greeks, more properly, a verb of existence, * *esti, est, is*. If then this verb may alone express every species of affirmation, it would seem to follow, that no other verb is necessary in language. And, in fact, no other is so necessary as this: nay, if it were as natural, or as convenient, for men to signify their meaning in many words, as in few, and to call every thing by its own name, as to express some things figuratively, we might perhaps affirm, that no other verb is *necessary*, nor any other form of it, but the third person singular of the present of the indicative, *est, is*.

But with the bare necessities of life the most needy savage is not contented; he aspires after convenience, and has even a taste for ornament. And, in framing language, as in every other work, all men are more or less actuated by the same motives; and, for the sake of elegance, as well as of utility,

substitute one word for another, and crowd the meaning of two or three into one; and sometimes diversify the same word with a number of inflections, so as to give it the power of expressing, without the aid of other words, a great variety of human thoughts. These contrivances are more observable in Greek and Latin, than in the modern tongues, and in the verb more than in any other part of speech. I have hitherto considered this attributive in its simplest, and most necessary form, as signifying pure affirmation. I now proceed to show, how it comes to be more complex, by being applied to other purposes.

Some truths are eternal and unalterable; as, God is good; Virtue is praiseworthy; The three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. To express the affirmation contained in these, and the like propositions, the verb of existence *is, est*, is alone sufficient: for truths like these have no dependence on time, place, or person, but are at all times, and on all occasions, invariably the same.

It may be said, that the third person plural of this verb, *Sunt, Are*, is equally necessary with the third person singular; because the subject of a proposition may be *many*, as well as *one*. And it is true, that, in all the languages we know, custom has made this third person plural necessary, by determin-

ing,

ing, that the verb shall agree in number with its nominative. But if custom had determined otherwise, we might have done without it. If I were to say, "Health, peace, and a good name, *is* desirable;" there would be a fault in the syntax, but nobody could be at a loss to know my meaning: and, if custom had not subjoined a plural verb to a plural nominative, or to two or more singular nominatives, there would have been no fault in the syntax. For, in old English, a verb singular sometimes follows a plural nominative; as in the following couplet from Shakspeare's *Venus and Adonis*,

She lifts the coffer-lids that close his eyes,
Where lo, two *lamps* burnt out in darkness *lies*.

The same idiom prevails in the Scotch acts of parliament, in the vernacular writings of Scotch men prior to the last century, and in the vulgar dialect of North Britain to this day: and, even in England, the common people frequently speak in this manner, without being misunderstood. Nay in Greek, which some affirm to be the most perfect of all languages; and in the Greek of Attica, which is allowed to be the most elegant dialect, the nominative plural of a noun of the neuter gender, and sometimes even of masculine and feminine nouns, is followed by the third person singular of the verb. And that, if the laws of the lan-
O guage

guage had permitted, the same thing might have obtained without inconvenience in all cases whatever, will not, I think, be denied by any person who considers the matter impartially.

But innumerable affirmations there are, which have a necessary connection with *time*. That may be true now, which was not true yesterday, and will not be true tomorrow. I may affirm concerning actions, that *have been performed*, or that *are now performing*, or that *will be performed hereafter*. Hence it would appear, that in a verb there must be some contrivance for expressing *time*.—I believe, however, it might be possible to frame a language, wherein past, present, and future time, as connected with affirmation, should be expressed by adverbs, or other auxiliary words: but this would make speech very unwieldy; and in fact we have no reason to think, that there is such a language on earth. If therefore we consider speech, not as it *might be*, but as it *is*, we must enlarge the definition of a verb formerly given; and call it, “A word, necessary in every sentence, and signifying affirmation (or assertion) with time.” According to this idea, we may, by means of the verb alone, and without having recourse to auxiliary words, affirm, or assert, not only what *is*, but also what *was*, and what *will be*.

Moreover,

Moreover, affirmations often have a connection with *persons*, as well as with time. I may affirm something concerning a quality, which belongs, or did belong, or will belong, to *me*, to *you*, or to *another*. *I am* reading; *you are* hearing; *he is* attentive: *I spoke*; *ye were* told; *he was* ignorant: *I shall* write; *you will be* undeceived; *he will be* thankful. This might be done, and often is, by prefixing to the verb the name of the person or persons spoken of. But I may have occasion to affirm concerning the qualities of a person whose name I know not: and if, in speaking of myself, I were to use my own proper name prefixed to the verb, it would not be known in many cases, to the hearer, whether I were speaking of myself, or of some other person of the same name. In a word, the same reasons, that prove the expediency of using pronouns instead of proper names, will also prove the necessity or propriety, of contriving the verb so as that it may express three persons; the first person, when one affirms any thing concerning one's self, *I am*; the second, when one affirms concerning the person to whom one speaks, *thou art*; the third, when one affirms concerning another, *he is*.

This *might* be effected by the simple contrivance of prefixing the personal pronouns to the verb, without any variation of the verb itself. For, though the Latins say, *non sumus*,

vos estis, illi sunt; giving to each person a different form of the verb; we express ourselves as *intelligibly*, when in English we say, *we are, ye are, they are*. And if this is intelligible in the plural, it must have been equally so in the singular, if custom had permitted us to say, *I am, thou am, he am*; or *I is, thou is, he is*. In fact, *I is*, or *Ise*, instead of *I am*, is frequent in Yorkshire; and by illiterate people the pronoun of the first person is often coupled with the verb of the third, as *I thinks, I goes*; nay, *says I* may be met with in good English authors, as well as in common conversation. From all which we may infer (these barbarisms being equally intelligible with the Grammatical phrases) that different inflections of the verb are not *necessary* to express the different persons. Yet, in all the known languages, different inflections of the verb are used, more sparingly in English than in most other European tongues, and in Greek and Latin with very great variety; which, as will be observed hereafter, is one chief cause of the superior elegance and harmony of these languages.

As affirmations may be made concerning *one* person, or concerning *more than one*, it is obvious, that the verb must express *number* as well as *person*: *Sumus, we are*, being as necessary in language as *Sum, I am*. But if the plural pronoun be prefixed, a change in the verb, however elegant, is not *necessary*
for

for expressing number. For in the English conjunctive mood, we say, without any ambiguity, *if I go, if thou go, if he go, if we go, if ye go, if they go.* And if this be done in one mood, without inconvenience, it might be done in another. Custom alone would soon render, *We am, ye am, they am,* as expressive as *we are, ye are, they are.*

Our idea of a verb, thus enlarged, will give rise to the following definition. "A verb is a word, necessary in every sentence, signifying affirmation, or assertion, with the designation of time, person, and number."

But, if we consider language, not as it might be in its rude state, but as it has been actually improved in many, and perhaps in all nations, we shall soon be satisfied, that we have not yet completed the idea of a verb. In fact, the definition now given expresses only the nature of that verb, which the Latins call *substantive*, *Sum, Fio, Forem, Existo,* and the Greeks *the verb of existence*, * *eimi, ginomai, pelomai, tunchanô, huparchô.*

As our thoughts shift with great rapidity, it seems natural, that those, who would by adequate utterance do justice to what they think, should rather shorten, than lengthen their expression. Hence, in most languages, the words that are in continual use, as per-

* *Eimi, γινωμαι, πηδωμαι, τυγχάνω, ὑπάρχω.*

sonal pronouns, articles, and the most common connectives, are generally short. Hence, too, that tendency which we have in conversation, to join two words in one, as *dont* for *do not*, *shant* for *shall not*, *ant* for *are not*, *int* for *is not*. And hence those multitudes of elliptical phrases to be found in every language. It needs not then seem wonderful, that men should express two or more meanings by one word, when that can be done conveniently.

Now some meanings more easily coalesce than others. Between the attribute which is affirmed to belong to any substance, and the affirmation itself, there is a very close affinity; and we naturally comprehend both in one word, and say, *I go*, instead of *I am going*; *He spoke*, instead of *he was speaking*.

And thus our idea of the verb is completed. And we may now define it, "A word, necessary in every sentence, signifying the affirmation of some attribute, together with the designation of time, number, and person."—Thus *lego, I read*, expresses the attribute *reading*, and affirms that attribute to belong, at the present time, to one person, which person is *myself*. So that this word *lego*, when analysed, is found to comprehend these five meanings; *I*, the person, and one person; *am*, the affirmation; *now*, the time; and *reading*, the attribute: which all together form a complete proposition, including

cluding a subject, a predicate, and a copula, and withal intimating unity of person, and present time.

But the verbs of all languages are not quite so complex: and the foregoing definition is applicable, rather to Greek and Latin verbs, than to those of our modern tongues. In English, the person must always be joined to the verb, in the form either of a noun or of a pronoun: for *read, readest, reads*, do not, like *lego, legis, legit*, form a sentence, without their respective pronouns, or nominatives, *I read, thou readest, he reads*, or *Alexander reads*. In English verbs, too, time past is frequently, and time future always, expressed by auxiliary words, as *shall, will, have, had, was, did, &c.*; whereas in Latin, and some other tongues, these varieties of time are signified by the inflections of the verb, *leget, legebat, legerat, &c.* In like manner, those changes in the *manner* of affirmation, which give rise to what Grammarians call the *modes* or *moods* of verbs, are signified in English by auxiliary words; but in some languages are expressed by varying the form of the verb. Thus *legisset* in Latin is in English *he might have read*; the person being expressed by the pronoun *he*; the mood, by the auxiliary *might*; the time, by *might, have*, and *read*, conjunctly; and the attribute, by the participle *read*.—Is it not self-evident, that those tongues which compre-

hend so much meaning in their verbs, must be more expressive and harmonious, than those that are forced to have recourse to so many auxiliaries?

Auxiliary words, however, are not unknown either in the Latin verb, or in the Greek. In the passive of the former, the *indicative* perfect and plusquamperfect, and the *subjunctive* perfect, plusquamperfect, and future, are inflected by means of the verb of existence, and the participle of time past, as *amatus eram*, *amatus fuero*, &c. And in the perfect and plusquamperfect of the *subjunctive* and *optative* of the Greek passive verbs, there is a similar contrivance.

But in our modern verbs and nouns the variety of auxiliary words is much greater. For the northern nations, who overturned the Roman empire, and established themselves in the conquered provinces, being an unlettered race of men, would not take the trouble either to impart their own language to the Romans, or to learn theirs with any degree of exactness: but, blending words and idioms of their own with Latin words inaccurately acquired, or imperfectly remembered, and finding it too great a labour to master all the inflections of that language, fell upon a simpler, though less elegant, artifice, of supplying the place of cases, moods, and tenses, with one or more auxiliary words, joined to nouns, verbs, and participles. And

hence,

hence, in the Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and French languages, the greater part of the words are Latin (for the conquered were more in number than the conquerors); but so disguised are those words, by the mixture of northern idioms, and by the slovenly expedient now hinted at, as to have become at once like the Latin, and very different from it.—The antient Greek, compared with the modern, is found to have undergone alterations somewhat similar, but not so great. For with the northern invaders the Greeks were never so thoroughly incorporated, as were the Europeans of the west: and, when conquered by the Turks, they maintained their religion, and so preserved their language from total depravation, though they could not prevent its debasement.

On many topicks, it is easier to propose than to solve difficulties, and to ask questions than to answer them. What is hinted in the last paragraph may be thought to account for the multitude of auxiliary words that belong to the verbs and nouns of modern Europe. But, for the multitude of *Inflections*, that are found in the nouns and verbs of the antient languages, how are we to account? Why did not the Greeks and Romans abound in auxiliary words as much as we?

Was it, because their languages, like regular towns and fortifications, were *made* by men of learning; who planned them before they

they existed, with a view to the renown of the poets, philosophers, and orators, who were to compose in them, as well as to the convenience of the people, who were to speak them: while the modern tongues, like poor villages that extend their bounds irregularly, are the rude work of a barbarous people, who, without looking before or behind them, on the right hand, or on the left, threw their coarse materials together, with no other view, than just to answer the exigency of the present hour?—This theory is agreeable to the ideas of some learned authors: but, if we pay any regard to history, or believe that human exertions are proportioned to human abilities, and that the Greeks and Romans were like other men, we cannot acquiesce in it.

They who first spoke Greek and Latin were certainly not less ignorant, nor less savage, than were those moderns, among whom arose the Italian, the Spanish, the French, and the English languages. If these last were formed gradually, and without plan or method, why should we believe, that the Classick tongues were otherwise formed? Are they more regular than the modern? In some respects they may be so; and it is allowed, and will be proved in the sequel, that they are more elegant; for, of two towns that are built without a plan, it is not difficult to imagine, that the one may be more convenient

venient and more beautiful than the other. But every polite tongue has its own rules; and the English, that is according to rule, is not less regular than the Greek that is according to rule; and a deviation from the established use of the language is as much an irregularity in the one as in the other: nor are the modes of the Greek tongue more uniform in Xenophon and Plato, or of the Latin in Cicero and Cesar, than those of the English are in Addison and Swift, or those of the French in Rollin, Vertot, and Fénélon.

But why should the inflections of language be considered as a proof of refinement and art, and the substitution of auxiliary words as the work of chance and of barbarism? Nay, what evidence can be brought to show, that the inflections of the Classick tongues were not originally formed out of obsolete auxiliary words prefixed, or subjoined, to nouns and verbs, or otherwise incorporated with their radical letters? Some learned men are of opinion, that this was actually the case. And though the matter does not now admit of a direct proof, the analogy of other languages, antient as well as modern, gives plausibility to the conjecture.

The inflections of Hebrew nouns and verbs may upon this principle be accounted for. The cases of the former are marked by a change made in the beginning of the word;
and

and this change is nothing more than a contracted preposition prefixed, answering to the English *of, to, from*: as if, instead of *animal, of animal, to animal, from animal*, we were to pronounce and write *animal, fanimal, tanimal, franimal*; which, if we were accustomed to speak so, would be as intelligible to us, as *animal, animalis, animali*, were to the Romans.—Of the Hebrew verb, in like manner, the persons are marked by contracted pronouns subjoined or prefixed to the radical letters. Thus, *masar*, he delivered; *masartba*, thou deliveredst, from *masar* the root, and *atba*, thou; *masartbi*, I delivered, from *masar*, and *aothi*, me, &c. And in Erse, a very antient species of Celtick, most of the inflections of the nouns and verbs may, if I am not misinformed, be analysed in a way somewhat similar.

If the English, and other modern tongues, had been spoken for ages before they were written (which we have reason to think was the case with the Greek and Latin) it is probable, that many of our auxiliaries would have been shortened and softened, and at length incorporated with the radical words, so as to assume the form of initial or final inflections. For it is while they are only spoken, and not written, that languages are most liable to alterations of this kind; as they become in some degree stationary from the moment they begin to be visible in writ-

ing. But we know, that writing was practised in many, and perhaps in most European nations, previously to the very existence of the modern languages: from which we may infer, that attempts would be made to write those languages almost as soon as to speak them. And if thus our auxiliary words were kept distinct in the beginning, and marked as such by our first writers, it is no wonder that they should have remained distinct ever since.

Had the Greek and Latin tongues been ascertained by writing at as early a period of their existence, their fate would perhaps have been similar: and their inflections might now, like those of the Hebrew, have been easily analysed, and found to be auxiliary words shortened and softened by colloquial use, and gradually incorporated with the radical part of the original nouns and verbs. But it was the misfortune of the modern languages (if it can be called a misfortune) that their form was in some measure fixed, before it became so complete as it might have been; that, without passing through the intermediate stages of childhood and youth, they rose at once (if I may so speak) from infancy to premature manhood: and in regard to the Classick tongues it was a lucky circumstance, that their growth advanced more gradually, and that their form was not established by writing, till after it had



had been variously rounded and moulded by the casual pronunciation of successive ages. Hence, if there be any truth in these conjectures (for they lay claim to no higher character) it will follow, that the Greek and Latin tongues are for this reason peculiarly elegant, because they who first spoke them were long in a savage state; and that the modern languages are for this reason less elegant, because the nations among whom they took their rise were not savage. This looks very like a paradox. And yet, is it not more probable, than any thing which can be advanced in favour of that contrary supposition, adopted by some learned men, that the Claflick tongues were planned by philosophers, and the modern languages jumbled rudely into form by barbarians?

Before I proceed, it may be proper to observe, that several definitions of the verb have been admitted by Grammarians, different from that which I have given, and some of them perhaps equally good.—Some have defined it thus: “A verb is a word, which
“ forms, when joined to a noun, a complete
“ sentence.” This is certainly true of the verb, and of no other part of speech; but does not sufficiently exprefs its character, as proceeding from an operation of the mind.—Others have said, that a verb is “a word
“ signifying *to be, to do, and to suffer.*” And true it is, that most of those attributives,
which

which have a connection with persons and times, may be referred to one or other of these three classes. But this definition does not mark the difference between the verb and the participle; because it omits the affirmation, which is the verb's most essential character.—Ruddiman has very well expressed the nature of a Latin verb, in these words, “*Verbum est pars orationis variabilis, aliquid de aliqua re dici seu affirmari significans.*” “A verb is a variable part of speech, signifying, that some affirmation or assertion is made concerning some thing.”—Aristotle says * *Rhēma esti to prosthēmainon chronon*: “A verb is that which signifies time, together with some other signification.” But this appears to me to be very inaccurate: for it neither distinguishes the participle from the verb; nor takes any notice of the attribute or of the affirmation, both which belong essentially to all verbs whatever. Nay, according to this definition, certain adverbs, as *diu, heri, nudiustertius, cras, hodie, &c.* would be verbs; for they express time, and withal signify, that the time is *long*, that it is limited to *yesterday*, to *the day before yesterday*, to *tomorrow*, to *the present day*, &c.—Buxtorff calls the verb *Vox flexilis cum tempore et persona*, “a declinable word with time and person,” which likewise overlooks both the affirmation and the attribute,

* *Ῥῆμα ἐστὶ τὸ προσθέμεινον χρόνον.*

—Some grammarians have said, that “a verb
 “ is a word signifying actions and passions.”
 But *Sum, I am*, is a verb, and yet it signifies
 neither the one nor the other, neither act-
 ing, nor being acted upon: and *percutiens*,
striking, denotes action; and *vulneratus*,
wounded, denotes *passion*, in the present sense
 of the word; and yet both are participles.—
 Scaliger thought, that “things fixed, per-
 “manent, and lasting,” are signified by
 nouns, and “things transient and tempo-
 “rary by verbs.” But *hora, ventus, amnis*,
hour, wind, river, signify things transient,
 and yet are nouns: and many verbs there
 are, which denote permanency, as *sedet, stat*,
est, habitat, dormit, obiit; *he sits, he stands*,
he is, he dwells, he sleeps, he died, or ceased to
live.

S E C T. III.

The subject continued. Of the Times or Tenses of verbs. Tenses, 1. Definite in time.—2. Indefinite in time, or Aorist.—3. Complete, or Perfect, in respect of action.—4. Incomplete, or Imperfect, in respect of action.—5. Compound, uniting two or more times in one.—6. Simple, expressive of one time only.—Remarks.

I Hinted, that the attributes, which have a connection with number and person, and may be made the subjects of affirmation, are reducible to one or other of these three heads, *to be, to act, and to be acted upon*; to which may be added a fourth, *to rest, or cease*, which however may perhaps be implied in the first. Verbs, therefore, there must be in all languages, to express, first, *Being*, as *Sum, I am*; secondly, *Acting*, as *Vulnero, I wound*; thirdly, *Being acted upon*, as *Vulneror, I am wounded*; and fourthly, *Being at rest*, as *Dormio, I sleep, Sedeo, I sit*.

Now, without some reference to *Time*, not one of these attributes can be conceived. For wherever there is *existence*, it must continue for some time, how short soever that time may be: and whatever existence we speak of, we must consider, as past (*he was*),

as present (he *is*), or as future (he *will be*); or as both past and present (he *was* and *is*); or as both present and future (he *is* and *will be*); or as extending through time future, as well as through that which is present and past, as, he *was*, he *is*, and he *will continue* to be.—Further, wherever there is *action* either *exerted* or *received*, there must be *motion*; and all motion implies *time*. For when *many* contiguous places are gone through in a given time, the motion is swift; and when *few* contiguous places are gone through in the same time, the motion is slow.—*Rest*, in like manner, implies duration: for if the want of motion did not continue for some time, we should not know, that there was rest.

Time, therefore, must make a part of the signification of all verbs, and of every part of every verb, in all languages whatever. And this leads me to speak more particularly of the *Times* of verbs, which in English are improperly called the *Tenses*; a word, whose *apparent* etymology would never lead us even to guess at its meaning; and which, if it were not explained to us, we should not think of considering as a corruption of the Latin *tempus*, or of the French *temps*.

Time is naturally divided into Past, Present, and Future. All past time was once present, and all future time will come at last to be present. If therefore we deny the
reality

reality of present time, as several philosophers both antient and modern have done, we must also deny the reality of past and future time, and, consequently, of time altogether. Nay more: Sense perceives nothing but what is present, Memory nothing but what is past, and Foresight forms conjectures in regard to futurity. If, therefore, we say, that there is no present time, nor consequently any future or past time, it will follow, that there are no such faculties in man, as sense, memory, and foresight.

The fundamental error in the reasonings of these philosophers, on the subject of time, is, that they suppose the present instant to have, like a geometrical point, neither parts nor magnitude; and that it is nothing more than the commencement of time future, and the conclusion of time past; even as the point, in which two right lines meet and form an angle, being itself of no magnitude, must be considered as the beginning of the one line, and the end of the other.

But, as nothing is, in respect of our senses, a geometrical point, (for whatever we see, or touch, must of necessity have magnitude) so neither is the present, or any other, instant of duration, wholly unextended. Nay, we cannot even conceive an unextended instant: and that which we call the *present* may in fact admit of very considerable extension.—
While I write a letter, or read a book, I say,
P 2 that

that I *am* reading or writing it, though it should take up an hour, a day, a week, or a month; the whole time being considered as present, which is employed in the present action. So, while I build a house, though that should be the work of many months, I speak of it in the present time, and say that I *am building* it. In like manner, in contradistinction to the century past, and to that which is to come, we may consider the whole space of a hundred years as time present, when we speak of a series of actions, or of a state of existence, that is co-extended with it; as in the following example: “In this century, *we are* more neglectful of the antients, and *we are* consequently more ignorant, than they *were* in the last, or than perhaps they *will be* in the next.” Nay the entire term of man’s probationary state in this world, when opposed to that eternity which is before him, is considered as present time by those who say, “In this state *we see* darkly as through a glass; but in a future life our faith *will be* lost in vision, and *we shall know*, even as we are known.”

Time past, and time future, are, in themselves *infinitely*, and, with respect to man, *indefinitely* extended: and, in speaking of time past, or of time future, men may have occasion to allude to different periods or extensions of past or future time. And hence, in all the European languages we know, and probably

probably in many other languages, there are in verbs several preterites and futures. Thus, in English, *I did it, I was doing it, I have done it, I had done it*, are plainly distinct preterites: and *I shall do it, I shall be doing it, I am about to do it, I shall have done it*, convey different ideas in regard to the transactions of future time.

But, in describing the necessary *times* or *tenses* of verbs, which is a curious part of science, and the most difficult thing, perhaps, in the grammatical art, I must be somewhat more particular.

As the verbs, that signify *to act* and *to be acted upon*, are of all verbs the most complex, and must therefore have as great a variety of tenses as any other verbs can have, I shall confine myself to them in the following analysis of the tenses. And when I have distributed the tenses of active verbs into their several classes, and explained the nature of each, the subject may be presumed to be sufficiently illustrated.

The first attempt that was made in this nation, so far as I know, towards a philosophical analysis of the tenses, may be seen in a grammar published in Queen Anne's time, and recommended by the *Tatler*, which is commonly called Steele's Grammar. It is in some respects more complete, than any other grammar of the English tongue that I have

met with; and discovers a precision and an acuteness not to be found in the other writings of Sir Richard Steele; whence I am inclined to think it is not his. Indeed, from the variety of style and matter, as well as from the Dedication to the Queen, which is subscribed *The Authors*, it would seem to have been the work of several hands.—About twenty years after, Doctor Clarke, in his very learned notes on Homer's Iliad, proposed an arrangement of the tenses; which, though imperfect, is ingenious, and did certainly throw light upon the subject.—Mr. Harris, in his *Hermes*, published in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty one, gave a more complete account of the tenses, than any preceeding grammarian. His theory has however been objected to, in many particulars, by the author of a late work *On the origin and progress of language*; who has framed a new one, and a better, which he illustrates with great learning, and grammatical skill.—I have looked into all these authors; but, though I have received useful information from each, especially from the last, I am not perfectly satisfied with any one of them. As there is something peculiar in each of their schemes, so is there in that which follows. The truth is, that this is a subject of great nicety; and, being withal very complex, it is no wonder that it should appear in different lights to different persons. That I should think favourably of my own theory,

theory, is natural; but it would be arrogance in me to presume, that others will look upon it with equal partiality.

It is impossible to analyse the Tenses, without continual reference to some one language or other. If we take our ideas of them from the Greek and the Latin, we shall be inclined to think, that nine tenses, or ten, or perhaps more, may be useful, or even necessary, in language. But if we were to judge of them according to the rules of some other tongues, we should greatly reduce their number: no more than two, the *past* and the *future*, being acknowledged by the Hebrew grammarian. This ought to be kept in mind, that we may not multiply tenses without necessity: at the same time let it not be forgotten, that, without reasoning from the analogy of the Greek and the Latin, one could not do justice to the subject; those being of all known languages the best cultivated, and the most comprehensive. Besides, in a speculation of this nature, redundance is less faulty than defect. The more minutely we discriminate the tenses, the more clearly we shall see from what modifications of human thought they derive their origin.

Some will not allow any thing to be a tense, but what in one inflected word expresses an affirmation with time: for that those parts of the verb are not properly called tenses, which assume that appearance by

means of auxiliary words. At this rate, in English, we should have two tenses only, the *present* and the *past*, in the active verb, and in the passive no tenses at all. But this is a needless nicety, and, if adopted, would introduce confusion into the Grammatical art. If *amaveram* be a tense, why should not *amatus fueram*? If *I beard* be a tense, *I did bear*, *I have beard*, and *I shall bear*, must be equally entitled to that appellation.

The Tenses of Active verbs I divide, first, in respect of *time*, into *Definite* and *Indefinite*. Those parts of the verb that express time indefinitely may be called *Aorists*. The word is Greek, and signifies *indefinite*: but the forms of the verb denoted by it are not peculiar to the Greek tongue, but must be in all languages, whether Grammarians take notice of them or not. And though, in the Greek Grammar, two *aorists only of past time* are mentioned, it will appear, that there may be, and in most languages probably are, aorists of the future, and even of the present, as well as of the past.

I. 1. When I say, *I read*, or *I am reading*, I express present time *definitely*: for what I affirm of myself holds true at this present moment, but perhaps will not be true the next, and certainly was not true an hour ago, when I was asleep. But when I say, "A merry heart *maketh* a cheerful countenance," I express what is always true,

true, what is not limited to any definite time, and what may be said at any period of present time: that is, in pronouncing this maxim, I use the present tense, but I speak of present time in general, or indefinitely; or, in other words, I use an *aorist of the present*. In all general assertions of this nature, expressed by present time, the tense is the same: as, Manners *make* the man; The merciful man *regardeth* the life of his beast; The tender mercies of the wicked *are* cruel; A wise son *maketh* a glad father; Grande dolori ingenium *est*; Two and two *are* four, &c. And as all men must occasionally speak in this manner, every cultivated language must have a similar contrivance; though there may be, and certainly are, many languages, in which the verb assumes no particular form in order to express it; I mean, no form different from the definite present. How then, you will say, is it known? I answer, By the sense of the words. If a verb of the present tense express time indefinitely, that tense is truly an aorist of the present, whatever be its form or termination.

The Hebrews, whose verbs have no present, express the meaning of this tense by the future. They who speak Erse do so too, though that language has a present. And in fact we often do the same, without ambiguity, or any awkward deviation from the
idiom

idiom of the English tongue. We may say, A prudent man *considers* before he acts, or, A prudent man *will consider* before he act: A wise son *maketh* a glad father, or, A wise son *will make* a glad father. These and the like expressions are equally connected with the present and with the future. We are not supposed to exclude the future, when we affirm their truth with respect to present time: and if the law of the language required that we should *always* express them in future time, we should not be understood to exclude the present, even in sentences like the following; Two and two *will be* four, Virtue *will be* praiseworthy, Honesty *will be* the best policy.

The other present, called here the Definite present, and exemplified by *Lego, I read*, is, in Hebrew, supplied, sometimes by other tenses, but, most commonly, by a present participle active (called *Benoni* *); and, in particular cases,

* This participle serves other purposes. It is sometimes a verbal noun. Thus *mefer* is not only *tradens*, but also *traditor*: *shofet* is both *judicans* and *judex*. *Shofetim*, the plural of the latter, is the title of that book which we call *Judges*. The name is no doubt the same with that given by Latin authors to the chief magistrates of Carthage, *Suffetes*. See Liv. xxviii. 37. The Hebrew, the language of Canaan, as *Haiah* calls it, and that of the Phœnicians, of whom the Carthaginians were a colony, were originally the same, with perhaps some difference of dialect. But the Romans, like the Ephraimites, could not pronounce the letter *Shin*, and therefore turned it into *S*, adding, as was usual with them, a termination from

cases, by an impersonal *isb*, signifying *there is*, or *it is*, which always has the import of the present, and suits equally all persons, genders, and numbers. So that, though in Hebrew verbs there is, properly speaking, no present tense, yet there are in the language several contrivances that answer the same purpose. *Affirmation with respect to present time* is indeed so necessary in all nations, that we cannot well conceive how any language should be unprovided of the means of expressing it.

I. 2. Secondly, when I say, *Scribam*, * *Grapsō*, *I shall write*, I utter a promise, in which future time is expressed indefinitely; for I do not allot the action of writing to any particular or definite part of time future. This, therefore, is an aorist of the future.—But when I say, *Scripturus sum*, † *mellō graphēin*, *I am about to write*, or *I am going to write*, I express future time *definitely*, or without an aorist: for the meaning is, that

from their own language.—Sometimes in the New Testament we find the present participle active used in the same way. Thus *ὁ πειραζων* is *the tempter*, and *ὁ βαπτίζων* *the baptist*.—*Benoni*, the name of the active present participle, signifies *intermediate*: and the participle is so called, perhaps, because it comes as it were between the two Hebrew tenses, the past and the future. It is spelled differently from the name *Benoni*, which Rachel when dying gave her new-born son, (Genes. xxxv. 18); though when expressed by Roman characters they appear the same.

* γράψω.

† μέλλω γράφειν.

I shall

I shall write immediately, or soon, after making the declaration. And this is, by most Grammarians, allowed to have been the import of that *paulo-post-futurum*, which is found in the passive verbs of the Greeks; where † *tuphtêsomai* signifies, indefinitely, or by the aorist, *I shall be beaten*; but || *tetupsomai*, the paulo-post-future, denotes, *I shall be immediately beaten*, or *I am about to be beaten*. This, both in Latin and English, we express by means of an auxiliary word or two, *Sum scripturus, I am about to write*: of which it is remarkable, that the auxiliary verb *sum, I am*, points at present time; while the participle *scripturus, about to write*, implies future time; whence we gather, that this form of the verb signifies time future joined to time present, or, in other words, that the futurity spoken of is presently to commence.—The Hebrews have no paulo-post-future; but by joining to their future such adverbs as *quickly, immediately, soon, &c.* they easily express the meaning. The same thing may, I suppose, be done in all other languages. Consequently, the paulo-post-future is not a necessary tense.

As general maxims may be signified by the aorist of the present, so the aorist of the future is often used in legislative sentences:—*Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal*; in which it is obvious, that no particular period of future time is meant,

† *tuphtêsomai.*|| *tetupsomai.*

but

but future time indefinitely, * *aoristós*, or in general. It is thy duty, *at all times*, and on *all occasions*, to abstain from theft and from murder. Here again we see a co-incidence of the future with the present. By a change of the phrase, every precept of this sort may be referred to present time: *It is* thy duty not to kill; *It is* thy duty not to steal: or, *I command* thee not to kill; *I forbid* thee to steal, &c.—The Present, though it cannot be called a part of the Future, is however an introduction to it. But the Future and the Past are of no kindred; and, being separated by the Present, can never be contiguous.

I. 3. That there is an *aorist* of the past, is easily proved. The Greek verbs, and the English too, have a particular form to express it, without the aid of auxiliary words. † *Egrapsa*, *I wrote*, or *I did write*, denotes, that the action of writing is *past*, but refers to no particular period of past time. When I say, “He *sent* me a letter, and I *answered* it,” both *sent* and *answered* are *aorists*, and point at past time indefinitely: the letters spoken of may, for any thing that appears in the sentence, have been written and sent a year ago, or twenty years ago, or last summer, or last week, or yesterday; for the tenses refer to no one portion of past time more than another.—But if I say, “He sent

* *Aoristos*.† *Egrapsa*.

“ me

"me a letter, and I *have answered* it," the verb *be sent* is an aorist; but *I have answered* is not an aorist; for it points at past time more definitely, and means, that I answered it *just now*, or *lately*.—It is worth while to attend to this auxiliary verb, by which we express *definite past time*; *I have answered*; *I have*, being the present tense, points at time present; and *answered*, being the participle of the past, refers to time past: whence we infer, that the time expressed by these words, *I have answered*, is a mixture of the present with the past, or rather, *the past terminating in or near the present*. And that this is the true character of the tense in question, will appear more clearly by and by.

We see then, that verbs express not only Present, Past, and Future time; but also time past, present, and future, either, first, *indefinitely*, that is, by aorists, or, secondly, *definitely*.

But observe, that the English auxiliary *have* is not always definite, even when joined to the preterite participle. "I *have heard* it said, I know not when, or by whom, that Charles the second on his death-bed declared himself a papist." Here the words *I have heard*, are so far from being definite in regard to time, that they may allude to a fact which happened ten, twenty, thirty years ago, or not one year ago, or to

a fact of which no body knows when it happened.

Observe, further, that, in order to define or ascertain time exactly, the verb alone, even in the definite tenses, is not sufficient, but must be illustrated by adverbs, or other words significant of exact time. For our notions in regard to the extent of time vary according to the nature of the actions spoken of: and if these be important, or of long continuance, or not usual, we are apt to consider the time, which precedes or follows them, as short, because they make a strong impression, and appear of great magnitude. A year after one's house is finished, one may say, "*I have finished my house:*" but "*I have answered Alexander's letter,*" is understood to have a shorter retrospect; unless the writing of the letter was a work of great labour and time. In like manner, "*I am to build a house,*" may be said a year before one begins to build; but, "*I am to take a walk,*" expresses a very near futurity. And therefore, as the expression of time by verbs, especially of time past and future, is rather relative than absolute, adverbs, and other words, come to be necessary, when we would speak with precision of past and future time. "*I am just going to take a walk;—I shall build a house this summer;—I have this moment finished my letter,*" &c.

II. The tenses of active verbs may be divided, secondly, *in respect of the mode of action* signified, into Perfect, which denote *complete action*, and Imperfect, which denote *incomplete action*.

A late author mentions another class of tenses, which he calls *Indefinite*, and of which he says, that they denote action, but without specifying, whether it be complete or incomplete. And, as an example, he gives the aorist of the past, * *Egrapsa, I wrote*, or *I did write*. But I cannot see, that there is any ground for this division. No other grammarian, so far as I know, either antient or modern, has taken notice of it; while the distribution of tenses into *perfect* and *imperfect* seems to be as old as grammar itself. And the learned Author, whom I allude to, affirms, that “in our grammatical inquiries we cannot quit the footsteps of the antients, without the greatest hazard of going wrong.” This novelty, however, I reject, not because it is new, but because I do not understand it. I can conceive a complete action, that is, an action, which has had, or is to have, a beginning and an end: I can also conceive an incomplete action, that has had a beginning, but which is not, or is not said to be, ended. But an action, which, though it must have had a beginning, is considered as neither ended nor continued, as

* *Egrapsa.*

neither

neither complete nor incomplete, I cannot conceive at all. When I say, "I wrote a letter," the *past time* is *indefinite*, but a *complete action* is plainly signified: if the letter had not been finished, "I was writing," would have been the proper tense. In like manner, "I wrote," though it does not imply, that the thing written, whether book or letter, was finished, (for no particular writing is specified) does yet signify, that the *act of writing* was both begun and ended. If it had not been *begun*, it could not be referred to past time; and if it had not been *ended*, or *discontinued*, (for these words applied to the simple act of writing are of the same import) it would have been still going on; and the affirmation concerning it would be to this purpose, "I have been writing all the morning, and am still writing." — But, to return to the second general division of tenses, into Perfect, denoting *complete action*, and Imperfect, which denote *incomplete action*.

II. 1. The aorist of the present may be said to denote incomplete action. When I say, "A merry heart *maketh* a chearful countenance," I express by the word *maketh* an action, or operation, which is always *a doing*, and never can be said to be *done* and *over*. For the time never yet was, since man was made, when gladness of heart did not display itself in the countenance, and,

Q while

while human nature remains unaltered, the time will never come when it shall cease to do so.

Further, the definite present, I mean the present that is definite in respect of time, does also denote incomplete action. While I am writing a letter, I say, *Scribo, I write, or I am writing*; which implies, that part of the writing is done, and that part of it is not done; that the action is begun, but not ended.

But the moment the writing is completed, I say, or I may say, "I have written;" in which are comprehended these three things. First, that the action is *complete*; for which reason the tense is called *perfectum*, the perfect: a word, which, from the frequent use of it in our grammars, may suggest to us the idea of *past time*; but which in reality signifies *perfect* or *complete* action: for, that there is a *perfect* of the *future*, as well as of the *past*, will appear in the sequel.—Secondly, the words "I have written" imply, that the action is not only complete, but also *past*; for which reason, the tense is called *preteritum perfectum*, the complete past, or the preterite perfect, or more briefly the *preterperfect*.—Thirdly, these words imply, that the action is *just now* completed, or *very lately*. From this relation of the preterperfect to present time, (for, as I already observed, it denotes past time ending in the present,

present, or near it,) the Stoicks, who were accurate grammarians, called it *the perfect or complete present*: but, as it denotes what *is done*, and, consequently, *what is not now a-doing*, I think it better to call it by its ordinary name, the preterperfect.

For this tense the Greeks have a particular form * *gegrapha*; the English, and other moderns, express it by an auxiliary verb joined to the participle, *I have written*. But it is remarkable, that for this tense the Latin verb has no particular inflection; for the same Latin word denotes both the preterperfect and the aorist of the past. *Scripsi*, for example, signifies, not only *I wrote*, or *I did write*, (referring to past time indefinitely) but also, *I have written*, referring to an action past and lately compleated. Hence arises a small ambiguity in the use of the Latin verb, from which the verbs of many other languages are free. But, by means of adverbs, and other auxiliary words that hang loosely upon the syntax of language, this ambiguity in the Latin tongue may be prevented, wherever it is likely to prove inconvenient.

And here we learn to correct an error in some of the common grammars; where *amavi* is translated *I have loved*; as if it were a true preterperfect, and nothing else, like the Greek † *pepbilēka*: whereas it is both a pre-

* γεγραφα.

† πεπιληκα.

terperfect, and an aorist of the past, answering both to *pepbilēka*, and to * *epbilēsa*; and should therefore be rendered, *I loved, I did love, or I have loved*. And children should be taught, that, though these three English phrases are here connected by the particle *or*, and are every one of them expressed by the Latin *amavi*, they are not of the same import; for that the last may sometimes differ considerably in signification from the other two.—One mistake leads to another. The imperfect *amabam* is in the common grammars rendered, *I loved or did love*; as if it were the aorist of the past, and the same with the Greek *epbilēsa*: whereas, so far as it is really the *imperfect*, it corresponds to the Greek † *epbiloun*, and, as will appear by and by, ought to have been translated *I was loving*. I do not however affirm, that it is *never* an aorist of the past. But, in good authors, that is not its common use; and when it is, the tense loses that character which entitles it to be called *imperfect*.

The Hebrews, having but one preterite, must confound, as the Latins do, the preterperfect with the aorist of the past, and make one word serve for both. When Job received the news of those accumulated calamities, which at once divested him of all his property, and of every domestick comfort, he

* ἑρῶσα.

† ἑρῶν.

rent his clothes, fell down upon the ground, and worshipped; and, according to our translation, said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." Here, (as the learned Author of *the origin and progress of Language* observes) the two preterites are elegantly distinguished; the first being the aorist, the other the preterperfect. "The Lord *gav*;" this happened formerly, but at what period of past time is not said:—and, "the Lord *bath taken* away;" this had just happened, or very lately, so that it might be said to be felt at the present moment. In the Hebrew, the tense is in both clauses the same: and the passage literally translated would be, "The Lord gave, and the Lord took away," or perhaps, "The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away." Job's meaning may, no doubt, be understood from these expressions; but seems to be more emphatically signified in our English bible, than by either of them, or even by the original Hebrew itself.—The preterperfect, therefore, as distinguished from the aorist preterite, is rather an useful, than a necessary, tense. In Latin, by means of an adverb of present time joined to the preterite, its full import might in many cases be given; though not so elegantly, perhaps, as in Greek or English. *Jehova dedit; et nunc abstulit Jehova: sit nomen Jehovæ benedictum.*

The Latins, as Mr. Harris and other learned authors have observed, sometimes use their perfect tense, to denote the annihilation or discontinuance of the attribute expressed by the verb: *fuit*, for example, to signify *he has been, he is no more*; *vixit*, *he has lived, he is dead*; and, at the conclusion of Academical harangues, *dixi*, *I have done speaking, I am silent*. In this view, the verbs *fuit*, *vixit*, and *dixi* are to be considered as *preter-perfect*; that is, as expressing an attribute connected with *that definite past time which terminates in or near the present*.—Thus, when Cicero had, by virtue of a sort of dictatorial authority conferred on him by the Senate for a temporary purpose, put to death some noblemen of Rome, who had been concerned in Catiline's conspiracy, he appeared in the forum, and, in the hearing of all the people, who were anxious to know the event, cried out with a loud voice, "*Vixerunt*," *they have lived*; that is, *they are dead*; "*their life continued down to this time has just now terminated*." Perhaps Cicero might have a scruple to use a more explicit term; *death* being one of those words that the Romans thought it ominous to pronounce on certain occasions. Or perhaps, though what he had done was constitutional, and of great public utility, yet, being extraordinary, and in a popular state somewhat hazardous at such a time, he might wish to mitigate the general opinion of its severity,

severity, by announcing it in such a manner, as should fix the attention of the people rather upon the *lives* and *crimes* of the conspirators, than upon their punishment.

Virgil has introduced the same idiom, with the happiest effect, in one or two passages of the *Eneid*. On the night of the destruction of Troy, Eneas, warned in a dream that the city was betrayed and on fire, starts from his bed, and, alarmed by the uproar of the battle, and the glare of the conflagration, rushes out in arms to attack the enemy. In his way he meets Panthus the priest of Apollo. What is the state of our affairs, Panthus, said he; what is to be done? Panthus with a groan replied,

Venit summa dies, et ineluctabile tempus
Dardaniæ: *fuimus* Troes, *fuit* Ilium, et ingens
Gloria Teucrorum.

“ Our last hour is come: Troy *has been*:
“ *we have been* Trojans.” As if he had said,
“ Trojans, and their city, and all their glory,
“ are to be reckoned among the things that
“ *have been*, but are now no more.”—The
same poet, speaking of Ardea, an antient Rutilian town, has these words,

— et nunc magnum manet Ardea nomen,
Sed fortuna *fuit*,

“ Ardea is still a great name; but its fortune
“ *has been*, or is over and gone.” Rucus,
indeed, the learned editor of Virgil for the

use of the Dauphin, explains the word otherwise, and makes it signify, that "fortune had so determined:" and in this he is countenanced by Scaliger. But the interpretation here given is more suitable to the context, as well as to the solemn phraseology of the poet; and is, besides, warranted by Taubmannus and Mr. Harris.

Rex erat Æneas nobis *—says Ilioneus to Dido, when he is describing the forlorn condition of the Trojans, then just landed in Africa, and (as he imagined) without their leader. The verse would have admitted *fuit*, which in this place might seem to have, but really would not have, the same meaning. For *fuit* would have implied that, in the opinion of the speaker, Eneas was now no more; whereas from what follows we learn, that it seemed to him not improbable, that their commander might still be alive. The imperfect tense *erat*, which only affirms, that Eneas was formerly their king, without saying that he had ceased to be so, has therefore a propriety which *fuit* would not have had, and which the scantiness of the English verb makes it impossible for a Translator to express without circumlocution.

I said, that the nature of the tense we now speak of is more fully expressed by the common appellation of *preterperfect*, than by

* *Æneid.* i. 544.

that of the *perfect present*, which is the name the Stoicks gave it. And so indeed it is for the most part. But I ought to have added, that this tense in Greek does sometimes imply, not past time terminating in or near the present, nor even complete action, but *past and present time united*; in which case it becomes a sort of present, and, in Doctor Clarke's opinion, should be called, not the preterperfect, but the *present perfect*: as in the following line of Homer:

* Kluthi meu, Argurotox', hos Chrusên amphibebêkas;

" Hear me, O God of the silver bow, who
" *hast been and art* the guardian of Chryse."

Mr. Harris seems to think, that, in Virgil, the preterperfect often implies the same sort of time with the present. That this is never the case, I will not affirm. But, if I mistake not, most of the passages he has quoted will be found to have a more expressive meaning, if we suppose the tense in question to signify *past time*. For example,

———— Si brachia forte remisit,
Atque illum in præceps pronò rapit alveus
amni. †

I would render thus: " If he who rows
" against the stream *has intermitted* for a

* Κλῦθι μου Ἀργυροτόξ' ὃς χρυσὴν ἀμφιβέβηκας. Iliad. i.

† Georg. i. ver. 202.

" moment

“ moment the exertion of his arms, head-
 “ long *he is* instantly born by the current of
 “ the river.” For *atque* is here used in the
 antique sense, and denotes *immediately*; as in
 that line of Ennius,

Atque atque ad muros properat Romana ju-
 ventus.

—So in the description of the night-storm of
 thunder, lightning, and rain,

Terra tremit, fugere fera—*

“ The earth is trembling”—you feel it, and
 therefore that commotion is *present*: but,
 when you look around you, *fugere fera*, you
 find that the wild beasts have disappeared, and
 therefore *had fled* away, before you lifted up
 your eyes. When the poet says,

— tardis ingens ubi flexibus errat

Mincius, et tenera prætexit arundine ripas: †

“ The great Mincius *rolls* slowly winding
 “ along, and *fringes* (or *borders*) his banks
 “ with reeds;” I agree with Mr. Harris,
 that the two verbs are the same in respect
 of time; but I do not find, that the tenses
 are different. The learned author probably
 mistook the present of *prætexo* for the pre-
 terit of *prætego*: which last is a word that
 Virgil never uses, and which I cannot re-
 collect to have seen in any Classick of the Au-
 gustan age.

* Georg. i. ver. 330.

† Georg. iii. ver. 15.

Once more, when the same poet says, of a ship,

— illa noto citius, celerique sagitta,
Ad terram *fugit*, et portu se *condidit* alto. *

“Swifter than the wind, or an arrow, she *flies* to land;”—this is present; “and *now*,” before I can speak the word, “she *has run* into the harbour.” There is in this example the same diversity of time, as if I were to say: “See how swiftly the boy pursues the butterfly; he *runs*—and now he *has caught* it.”—But of this, enough.

II. 2. The tenses of past time denote two sorts of actions; first, actions *complete* or *perfect*, and secondly, actions *incomplete* or *imperfect*.

First, I say, the tenses of past time denote complete actions. Of this kind, for the most part, is the preterperfect above described, which expresses past time as ending in the present, or near it.—Of this kind, also, is the aorist of the past † *εγραψα*, I *wrote*, or I *did write*; as already observed.

And of the same kind is the tense called *Plusquamperfectum*; which denotes complete action connected, not with present, but with past time. That this is its import, will appear from an example. “He came to

* *Æneid*. v.

† *εγραψα*.

“forbid

“ forbid me to write, but I *bad written* before he came.” Here observe, that the words *I bad written* refer, first, to a complete action; secondly, to past time; and, thirdly, to an action that was prior in time to another action which is also past. This is the peculiar meaning of the plusquamperfect: so that in three respects it resembles the preterperfect, namely, in denoting complete action, past time, and past time definite; but from the preterperfect it differs in this one respect, that the time expressed by it terminates not in time present, but at some point of the time that is past. And the double reference which it bears to past time appears in our complex way of expressing it, *I bad written*; in which it is observable, that the auxiliary *bad* and the participle *written* are both significant of past time. The Greeks and Latins elegantly express this tense by one word, which is derived immediately from the preterperfect, to which indeed it bears a nearer affinity than to any other tense: *scripsi, scripseram*; * *gegrapha, egegraphein*.—So much for those tenses of past time, which denote complete action.

Secondly, there is also a preterite tense, which denotes incomplete action: *Scribebam, I was writing*. In this expression it is implied, that the action is past, that it continued, or might have continued for some

* *γραφειν, γεγραφα*.

time, but that it was *not finished*. The tense therefore is very properly called the *imperfect preterite*. The Greeks gave it a name signifying * *extended*; and described it more particularly, by saying, that "it is the " extended and incomplete part of the past." —Eneas, in Virgil, speaking of the destruction of Troy, relates, that, after he had conducted his father and followers to a place of safety, he returned alone to the burning city, in quest of his wife Creusa, who was missing. He went first to his own house, thinking, she might have wandered thither: but there, he says,

— *Irruerant Danai, et tectum omne tenebant;*

" the Greeks *had rushed* in, and *were possess-*
" *ing* the whole house." Observe the effect of the plusquamperfect, and imperfect, tenses. The Greeks *had rushed* in, *irruerant*; that action *was over*, and had been compleated *before he came*: but the act of possessing the house, *tenebant*, was *not over*, nor *finished*, but *still continuing*. This example is taken notice of by Mr. Harris. I shall give another from Virgil, and one from Ovid.

In the account of the paintings, which Eneas is surprised to find in the temple of Juno at Carthage, they being all, it seems, on the subject of the Trojan war, the poet mentions the following circumstance,

* *WAPOTATINGS.*

Ter circum Iliacos *raptaverat* Hæctora muros,
Exanimumque auro corpus *vendebat* Achilles :

which informs us both of the action of the picture, and of the event that was supposed to have preceded it. “ Achilles *had dragged* “ the body of Hæctor three times round “ the walls of Troy ;”—this is the previous event ;—“ and *was selling*,” that is, was represented in the act of delivering, “ the “ body to Priam, and receiving the ransom.” All this is easily conceived ; and an excellent subject it is for a picture. But if, without distinguishing the tenses, we were to understand the passage, as Dryden has translated it,

Thrice round the walls of Troy Achilles drew
The corpse of Hæctor, whom in fight he slew, &c.

we should be inclined to think, that Virgil knew very little of the laws, or of the powers, of painting. For, according to this interpretation, Achilles must have been painted in the act of *dragging Hæctor three times round Troy*, and also in the act of delivering the body to Priam. Pitt, Trapp, and Ogilvie, in their Translations, have fallen into the same impropriety ; a proof, that the theory of tenses has not always been attended to, even by men of learning.

When Dido had just struck the fatal blow,
and lay in the agonies of death, the behaviour

viour of her Sister, as described by Dryden, is somewhat extraordinary. Anna was at a little distance from the pile, on which lay the unfortunate queen: but, hearing of what had happened, she ran in distraction to the place, and addressed Dido in a long speech. That being ended,

— She mounts the pile with eager haste,
And in her arms the dying queen embraced;
Her *temples chafed*, and *her own garments tore*,*
To stanch the streaming blood, and cleanse the
gore.

The speech is very fine, and very pathetick; in Virgil, at least, it is so: but, as it appears in Dryden, (and Pitt commits the same mistake) never was any thing of the kind more unseasonable. The poor lady was dying, the blood streaming from her wound; and yet this affectionate sister (for such we know she was) would not attempt any thing for her relief, till she had declaimed for fourteen lines together.—But, from Virgil's own account we learn, that Anna did not lose a moment. She *had mounted* the lofty pile, and *was holding* her dying sister to her bosom, and weeping, and *endeavouring* to stop the effusion of blood, all the while that those

* Considering Dido's condition, to *chafe her temples* was absurd, if not cruel: and to insinuate, that Anna on this occasion did not spare *her own clothes*, is ridiculously trifling. Virgil says not a word of chafing temples, or of tearing garments.

passionate exclamations were breaking from her.

— Sic fata, gradus *evaserat* altos

Semianimemque sinu germanam amplexa *fovebat*

Cum gemitu, atque atros *siccabat* veste cruores.

This the English poet would have known, if he had not confounded the imperfect tense with the perfect and plusquamperfect, and supposed them all to mark the same sort of time and of action. Similar blunders are frequent in Dryden, and in all the other translators of Virgil that I have seen.

In Ovid, when the Flood was abated, Deucalion, having concluded a very tender speech to Pyrrha with this sentiment, “ It “ has pleased the Gods, that we are the only “ survivors of the whole human race ;” the poet adds,

*Dixerat ; et flebant : placuit celeste precari
Numen.*—

“ He *had done speaking* ; and they *were weep-*
“ *ing* ; when it occurred to them to im-

“ *plore* the aid of the Goddess of the place.”

The speech had been for some time concluded ; then followed a pause, during which they wept in silence ; and, while they were weeping, they formed this pious resolution. The plusquamperfect, followed by the imperfect, is here very emphatical, and gives in two words an exact view of the behaviour of

of this forlorn pair; which would be in a great measure lost, if, confounding the tenses in English, we were to translate it, as is vulgarly done; "He spoke, and they wept:" which marks neither the continuance of the last action, nor that it was subsequent to the first.—If children are not well instructed in the nature of the several tenses, it is impossible for them to enter into the delicacies of classical expression.

The Latins elegantly use this imperfect tense to signify actions that are customary, and often repeated. Thus *dicebat* may imply, *he was saying*, or *he was wont to say*; the same with *solebat dicere*. For actions that have become habitual, or which are frequently repeated, may be said to be always going on, and may therefore with philosophick propriety be expressed by the imperfect tense.

It also deserves notice, that the antient painters and statuaries, both Greek and Latin, made use of this tense, when they put their names to their performances. On a famous statue of Hercules still extant are inscribed these words, * *Glycôn Athênaios epoiei*, Glycon Atheniensis *faciebat*, Glycon an Athenian *was making* it. The phrase was thought modest; because it implied, that the artist had indeed been at work upon the statue,

* ΓΛΥΚΩΝ ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΣ ΕΠΟΙΕΙ.

but did not pretend to say that he had finished it, or made it complete: which would have been the meaning, if he had given it in the aorist * *epoiêse, fecit, made* it. Some of our printers have adopted the same tense at the beginning or end of their books; “*Excudebat* Henricus Stephanus: *Excudebant* Robertus et Andreas Foulis.”

Cesar, whose narrative is not less distinguished by its modesty, than his actions were by their greatness, often uses the imperfect, in speaking of himself, where I think he would have used the perfect, if he had been speaking of another. This must have been wonderfully pleasing to a Roman; who would be much more sensible of the delicacy, than we are. Indeed, the best antient and modern criticks, particularly Cicero, Quintilian, and Roger Ascham, speak with a sort of rapture of the exquisite propriety of Cesar's style. And as to his narrative, though he pretended to nothing more, than to write a journal or diary, (for such is the meaning of the word, which is vulgarly translated *Commentaries*) — as to his narrative, I say, Cicero declares, that no man in his senses will ever attempt to improve it. The frequency of these imperfects in Cesar has, if I mistake not, another use: for it keeps the reader continually in mind, that the book was written from day to day, *in the midst*

* *Imperfect.*

of business, and while the transactions there recorded might be said rather *to be going on*, than to be completed.

From the few examples here given it will appear, that the Imperfect and Plusquamperfect are very useful, and may be the source of much elegant expression; and that, if one were not taught to distinguish, in respect of meaning as well as of form, these tenses from each other, and the preterit from both, one could not pretend to understand, far less to translate, any good Classick author. The want of them, therefore, in Hebrew, must be a deficiency. Yet, in a language, like the Hebrew, which has been employed chiefly in delivering sentiments and recording facts, in the simplest manner, with little rhetorical art, and without any ostentation of harmonious and elaborate periods, this is not perhaps so material a deficiency, as at first sight it may appear.

For first, if we are willing to dispense with elegance and energy, the preterit may often be used for the plusquamperfect. If I say, "He came to forbid me to write, but I *wrote* before he came, (instead of *I had written*)," the meaning is perceptible enough; though not so grammatically expressed as it might have been, nor indeed so strongly. In the translation of the fourteenth chapter of St. Matthew, we have these words: "And Herod said unto his servants, This is
R 2 " John

“ John the Baptist; he is risen from the
 “ dead; and therefore mighty works do show
 “ forth themselves in him. For Herod *bad*
 “ *laid hold* on John, and bound him, and
 “ put him in prison, &c.” Here the plus-
 quamperfect *bad laid hold and bound* is ele-
 gantly used. But the Greek, following, as
 in many other parts of the Gospels, (espe-
 cially of Matthew's Gospel) the Hebrew
 idiom, has the aorist of the preterit: “ For
 “ Herod, having laid hold on John, *bound*
 “ him, and *put* him in prison.” This gives
 the sense; though not so emphatically, as it
 is expressed in the English Bible.*

Secondly: The preterit *may* be used, with-
 out ambiguity, for the imperfect. This
 change might often be made in Cesar, as
 already hinted. The French *j'étois* and *je fus*
 are both rendered in English *I was*. And,
 instead of *Stephanus exudebat*, at the bottom
 of a title-page, if we were to read *Stephanus*
exudit, the phrase, though less classical,
 would be equally intelligible. So liable, in-
 deed, are these two tenses to be confounded,
 that in some Latin grammars (as formerly
 observed) we find *I loved or did love* given as
 the interpretation of *amabam*.

Thirdly: The Hebrews do sometimes give
 the full sense of the plusquamperfect, by pre-

* Other examples of the preterit used for the plus-
 quamperfect, see in Luke xix. 15. John v. 13. Apoca-
 lyph. vii. 1.

fixing,

fixing, to the infinitive of the verb, or to a sort of verbal noun called a gerund, the word *calab*, *be finished*, or *be made an end of*. "As soon as Isaac made an end of blessing Jacob" — might, according to the syntax of those languages that have a plusquamperfect, be thus rendered without any impropriety, "As soon as Isaac *had blessed* Jacob." * — A similar idiom we have in English; as when, instead of *dixerat*, we say, *he had done speaking*, or *he had ceased to speak*.

III. 1. It remains now to show, that the tenses expressive of *future* time may also denote, first *Incomplete* actions, and secondly *Complete* actions.

First, *Scribam*, *I shall write*, denotes incomplete action: for it does not say, whether I am to write for a long or for a short time, or whether I am to finish what I begin. This part of the verb, therefore, to which the Greek † *γραφω* corresponds, is an *imperfect future*; and is also (as was formerly shown) an aorist of the future. In our way of expressing it, by the auxiliaries *shall* and *will*, its character appears manifest. *Shall* or *will* refers to future *time* indefinitely; and *write* refers to an action, which is indeed to begin, but of whose completion nothing is said.

* Genes. xxvii. 30. See also Numb. xvi. 34.

† *γραφω*.

In like manner, *Scripturus sum*, I am about to write, though definite in regard to time, because it implies, that the action is immediately to commence, is yet as much an *imperfect* as the other future, because it says nothing of the finishing or compleating of the action.

But, secondly, *Scripsero*, I shall have written, or I shall have done writing, is a *perfect future*, and denotes complete action. And our complex way of putting it in English does fully express its character; *I shall have written*: for *shall* denotes future time, *written* implies past action; and *have written* signifies complete action, with past time terminating in the present. So that the whole meaning is, that “when a certain time now
“future comes to be present, a certain ac-
“tion will then, and just then, be finished.” —This tense the Greek tongue, for all its copiousness, cannot express in one word. * *Efomai gegraphós* is the phrase for it; *efomai* the future of † *eimi* I am, and *gegraphós* the preterperfect participle; “I shall be in the
“condition of having written.” The Latin grammarians call it the future of the subjunctive mood; for which they are severely blamed by Dr. Clarke, in his notes upon Homer; who contends, and I think with reason, that it is as really indicative, as *Scribam*, and

* *εφομαι γεγραφως.*

† *Ειμι.*

Scriptus

Scriptus ero. The learned Doctor calls it the *perfect future*. Vossius gives it the same name; which Ruddiman * approves of: and Mr. Harris, and the Author of a Treatise, *On the origin and progress of language*, describe it under the same character.—In Hebrew, the full import of this tense is given by joining the future of *calab* (he made an end of) to the infinitive or gerund of another verb. Thus, “And it shall be, when the officers *have made an end of speaking* unto the people, that they shall make captains of the armies to lead the people,”—would have been equally just in respect of sense, and better suited to the conciseness of the original, if it had been rendered, “And it shall be, when the officers *shall have spoken* unto the people,” &c. †

IV. There is yet another light, in which the tenses may be considered. Some of them, as we have seen, unite two times (as it were) in one; others express one time only. The former may be called *Compound* tenses; the latter *Simple*.

1. Of the *Compound* Tenses, one is the *preterperfect* ‡ *gegrapha*; which unites the past with the present; as particularly appears in our way of expressing it, with an auxiliary of the present, *I have*, and a participle of

* Rudiments of the Latin tongue, page 43.

† Deuteron. xx. 9.

‡ γιγγρα.

complete action and past time, *written*; I have written.

Another is the plusquamperfect, *Scripteram*, which unites *the past with the past*, by intimating, that a certain past action was completed before another action which is also past. The union of these two past times is also signified by us, when we join the preterite of the auxiliary *had* with the preterite of the participle *written*; I had written.

A third compound tense is the future of complete action, or the perfect future *Scriptero*, I shall have written, * *Esomai gegraphós*; which, as appears by the English and Greek way of expressing it, forms an union of the preterperfect, that is, *of the complete past ending in the present*, with the future. Of this tense it is remarkable, that in the English (as in the Greek) way of expressing it, *I shall have written*, or, *I shall have done writing*, there is no auxiliary of the subjunctive mood: a circumstance, that sufficiently shows the absurdity of calling it *the future of the subjunctive*.

A fourth is the definite future, *Scripturus sum*, I am going to write, or, I am about to write: in which the present is united with the future, *Sum* with *Scripturus*, to intimate a futurity that is just commencing. We express it in English by a sort of figure; I

am *going* to write; that is, I am engaged in an action which is preparatory to, or will be immediately followed by, the act of writing. The other English phrase is, I am *about* to write; that is, I am at the *point*, the *nearer end*, or *the beginning* of the action of writing: for *bout* in French denotes *point* or *end*; and *au bout*, at the point, or at the end; so that it is probable we have derived this idiom from the French language.

A fifth compound tense is in Latin *Scripturus eram*; in Greek * *Emellon graphein*; in English, I *was about* to write. We use it, to express an action, which at a certain time now past would have taken place immediately, if something had not happened to prevent or defer it, or at least to claim a prior attention. So in the tenth chapter of the Apocalypse; "And when the seven
" thunders had uttered their voices, I was
" about to write, *Emellon graphein*: and I
" heard a voice from heaven, saying unto
" me, Seal up those things which the seven
" thunders uttered, and write them not." It is therefore a composition of the past *eram*, with the definite or paulo-post *future*, *Scripturus*. But there is not in any language, so far as I know, a contrivance for comprehending all this in *one word*; and therefore, like some other tenses, it must be

* ἐμελλον γραφειν,

signified

signified by auxiliary words joined to the participle of future time.

I shall be writing, * *Esomai graphôn*, is the last compound tense that I shall mention. It occurs in sentences like the following, "I cannot come tomorrow before dinner," "for *I shall be writing* all the morning;" and is therefore a coalition of the *future* with the *imperfect*. It differs however from the incomplete future formerly described, and exemplified by *Scribam*, I shall write. This last denotes incomplete action, and indefinite (or aoristical) futurity: but *I shall be writing* denotes *both these*, together with *extended* or *continued action*. — So much for compound tenses; which unite two or more times in one. — If the reader will not allow these two last forms of expression to be Tenses, I shall not insist on it, that they are. I call them so, because they have been so called by others.

2. The *simple* tenses, expressive of *one time only*, are these that follow. — 1. The definite present, *Scribo*, I write. — 2. The aorist of the present, "A merry heart *maketh* a chearful countenance." — 3. The aorist of the past, † *Egraphsa*, I wrote, or I did write. — 4. The aorist of the future, *Scribam*, I shall write. — 5. The imperfect, or the continued and incomplete past, *Scribebam*, I was writing. —

* *ἔσομαι γράφων.*

† *ἔγραψα.*

These

These tenses have all been sufficiently described under other characters.

And now, of the ELEVEN TENSES here explained, which, being a strange as well as an odd number, we may, by omitting the two last, and retaining the Paulo-post-future (because there is a tense of that name in the Greek Grammar) reduce to NINE, the number of the Muses;—of these eleven tenses, I say, the arrangement and general nature may be seen at one glance, in the following Table.

TENSES OF ACTIVE VERBS.

DEFINITE IN TIME.

- The *Present*. Scribo. I write. N° 1.
 The *Preterperfect*. I have written. N° 2.
 The *Paulo-post-future*. Scripturus sum.
 N° 3.

INDEFINITE IN TIME, OR AORIST.

- The *Present*. A merry heart maketh, &c.
 N° 4.
 The *Past*. Egrapsa. I wrote, or I did write. N° 5.
 The *Future*. Scribam. I shall write. N° 6.

COMPLETE IN RESPECT OF ACTION.

- The *Preterperfect*. I have written. N° 2.
 The *Aorist of the past*. I wrote. N° 5.
 The

The *Plusquamperfect*. I had written. N° 7.
 The *Future perfect*. Scripsero. I shall have written. N° 8.

INCOMPLETE IN RESPECT OF ACTION.

The *Imperfect and continued past*. I was writing. N° 9.
 The *Aorist of the future*. Scribam. I shall write. N° 6.
 The *Paulo-post-future*. Scripturus sum. N° 3.

COMPOUND, AS UNITING TWO OR MORE TIMES IN ONE TENSE.

The *Preterperfect*. Past with present. N° 2.
 The *Plusquamperfect*. Past with past. N° 7.
 The *Future perfect*. Present and past with future. N° 8.
 The *Paulo-post-future*. Present with future. N° 3.
 The *Past with future*. Scripturus eram. N° 10.
 The *Imperfect with future*. I shall be writing. N° 11.

SIMPLE, EXPRESSIVE OF ONE TIME.

The *Definite present*. N° 1.
 The *Aorist of the present*. N° 4.
 The *Aorist of the past*. N° 5.
 The *Aorist of the future*. N° 6.
 The *Imperfect and extended past*. N° 9.

The

The Tenses, reduced to Nine, are, 1. The *Indefinite Present*. 2. The *Definite Present*. 3. The *Imperfect*. 4. The *Indefinite Preterit*, or *Aorist of the Past*. 5. The *Preterperfect*. 6. The *Plusquamperfect*. 7. The *Indefinite or Aorist Future*. 8. The *Paulo-post-future*. 9. The *Perfect Future*.

It will perhaps occur, that there are two Greek tenses, whereof in this long detail I have given no account; namely, the *second aorist*, and the *second future*. The truth is, that I consider them as unnecessary. Their place, for any thing I know to the contrary, might at all times be supplied by the first aorist and the first future. Some grammarians are of opinion, that the first aorist signifies time past in general, and the second, indefinite time past; and that the first future denotes a nearer, and the second a more remote futurity. But this, I apprehend, is mere conjecture, unsupported by proof. And therefore I incline rather to the sentiments of those who teach, that the second future and second aorist have no meaning different from the first future and first aorist; and that they are the present and imperfect of some obsolete theme of the verb, and, when the other theme came into use, happened to be retained, for the sake of variety perhaps, or by accident, with a preterite and future signification. Be this as it will; as these tenses are peculiar to the Greek, and have nothing correl-

corresponding to them in other tongues, we need not scruple to overlook them as superfluous.

Different nations may make use of different contrivances for marking the times of their verbs. The Greeks and Latins distinguish their tenses, as well as their moods, and the cases of their nouns, adjectives, and participles, by varying the termination, or otherwise changing the form, of the word; retaining, however, those radical letters, which prove the inflection to be of the same kindred with its theme. The modern tongues, particularly the English, abound in auxiliary words, which vary the meaning of the noun or attributive, without requiring any considerable varieties of inflection. Thus, *I did read, I shall read, I should read*, have the same import with *legi, legam, legerem*. It is obvious, that a language, like the Greek and Latin, which can thus comprehend in one word the meaning of two or three, must have some advantages over those which cannot. Perhaps indeed it may not be more perspicuous: but, in the arrangement of words, and consequently in harmony and energy, as well as in conciseness, it may be much more elegant. Every idea that Greek or Latin can express may in one way or other be expressed in English. But if we were to attempt the same varieties of arrangement, we should see

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a wonderful superiority in the former. Virgil could say,

Formosam resonare doces Amaryllida silvas:

But we cannot say, "Fair to resound thou
"teachest Amaryllis the woods." Had the poet's verse permitted, the syntax of his language would not have hindered him from changing the order of these five words in many different ways, with equal significancy. But when we attempt more than two or three modes of arrangement, we are apt to fall into ambiguity or nonsense. Nay in many cases we are limited to one particular arrangement. A Roman might have said, *Achilles interfecit Hectorem*, or *Hectorem interfecit Achilles*, or *Achilles Hectorem interfecit*, or *Hectorem Achilles interfecit*, or *Interfecit Hectorem Achilles*, or *Interfecit Achilles Hectorem*: but we must say, *Achilles slew Hector*; for, if we vary the sentence ever so little, we produce ambiguity, nonsense, or falsehood; ambiguity, as *Achilles Hector slew*; nonsense, as *Slew Hector Achilles*; falsehood, as *Hector slew Achilles*.

It has been observed of the English, that they are much inclined to shorten their words into monosyllables; which a certain author wittily assigns as a proof, that taciturnity is natural to the people. It may also be remarked, that we are not friendly to inflection: for, few as the terminations of our verbs are, we seem inclinable to reduce their
number.

number. Thus some authors confound *wrote* with *written*, or rather abolish *written*, and use *wrote* instead of it; and say, not only, "he *wrote* a book," which is right; but also, "the book is well *wrote*," instead of "well *written*." To mistake the aorist of the past for the preterite participle, would have a strange effect in Latin or Greek; and is not less ungrammatical in English.—In like manner, some of our writers seem to forget, that English verbs have in the indicative mood a second person singular; for they say, *thou writes*, instead of *thou writest*: which is as improper in our language, as *tu scripsit* would be in Latin. And, both in speech and in writing, it has been too customary, of late years, to discontinue the use of that conjunctive or subjunctive mood, which was formerly, by our best writers, introduced after such words as *if, though, before, whether, unless, &c.*: as, "If he *write*, I will answer him,"—"Though he *slay* me, I will trust in him,"—"I expect to see him before he *go* away," &c. instead of which phrases, many people would now say, less properly, "if he *writes*—though he *slays*—before he *goes*," &c. *—This however is the more excusable, because the indicative may sometimes be elegantly used in such a connection: as, "If there *is* a Power above us, he must

* This, and the preceding, and some other grammatical and verbal improprieties, are frequent in *Sterne*.

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"delight in virtue." For the first clause, though introduced by *if*, is not meant to express what is in any degree doubtful, indefinite, or dependent: and therefore, it has not that character, which distinguishes the subjunctive from the indicative.—As our language has too little inflection, it is pity it should lose any of the little it has.

Past time being prior to present, and present to future, one would think, that grammarians, in arranging the tenses, should have given the first place to the preterites. Yet in the Greek and Latin, and all modern grammars, the order is different, and the present has the precedency: which by Scaliger is thus whimsically accounted for. What stands connected with present time is perceived by sense alone, and may therefore be known in some degree to all animals; but memory, as well as sense, is requisite to give information of what is past; and, in order to anticipate the future, sense, memory, and reason are all necessary.—The true reason I take to be this. The Present is put first, because in Greek and Latin it is considered as the theme or root of the verb; every other tense being derived from it, and it derived from no other tense: and the Preterits take place of the Future, in Latin, on account of the natural precedency of past to future time; and, in Greek, the Future takes place of the Preterits,

terits, because from the Future the Preterits are derived.

Having finished the subject of Tenses, I proceed to explain the nature of *Moods*, and to inquire, in what respects they are essential to language.

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S E C T. IV.

The Subject continued.—Of the Modes, or Moods of verbs.—Gerunds and Supines.—Species of verbs.

IN speaking, we not only convey our thoughts to others; but also give intimation of those peculiar affections, or mental energies, by which we are determined to think and speak. Hence the origin of *Modes* or *Moods* in verbs. They are supposed to make known our ideas, with something also of the intention, or temper of mind, with which we conceive and utter them.

In most languages, the use of moods is a matter of some difficulty; and the source of much elegance, in marking with a significant brevity certain minute varieties of meaning, which without this expedient would produce awkward circumlocutions. This will appear from some of the following examples. And the advantages here hinted at are more conspicuous in Greek and Latin, than in English. For in those languages the moods are marked by particular inflections of the verb; and the rules for their use are ascertained more exactly than in our tongue, and better adapted to the varieties of human thought.

As the theory of moods is not altogether the same in any two languages, one cannot enter into it with any great degree of minuteness, in an inquiry into the principles of Universal Grammar. All therefore I have to do in this place, is to give some account of their general nature, and show in what respects they may be essential to language.

If I affirm concerning that which I conceive absolutely to be present, or past, or future, I use what is called the *Indicative* or *Declarative* mood: as *I go, I was going, I had gone, I went, I shall go*. In all history and science this mood predominates; and in every language it is necessary. It is the business of the historian to say, not what Cesar *might have done*, or what he *might have been*, but what he *was*, and what he *did*: the truths of geometry are invariable, and therefore absolute: and the philosopher considers the works of nature as they *are, have been, and will be*, and not as they *might have been* under the influence of different laws.

If, together with the simple affirmation of the verb, I also express some modification or affection of it, such as power, possibility, liberty, will, duty, &c. the mood is called *Potential*: as *I may write, I might have been consulted, I could live on vegetables, I would speak if I durst, He should have acted otherwise*.

If I signify, by means of a verb, something which is affirmed, not absolutely by itself, but relatively to some other verb on which it is dependent, I use the *Subjunctive* mood: as, I eat, *that I may live*; *if he go*, I will follow; *whether he be alive*, I know not. This has also been called the *Conjunctive* mood; perhaps because the verb so modified is often ushered in by a conjunction, *that, if, whether, &c.*

The *Optative* mood is said to express a wish or desire; and in Greek is marked by a particular form or inflection of the verb. Yet, even in Greek, a wish may be expressed by other moods besides the optative; and, without the aid of one or more auxiliary words, cannot be expressed even by the optative itself. Whence it may be inferred, that this mood is superfluous, even in Greek; and, as it is found in no other tongue, that it cannot be essential to language. In fact, the Greek optative often conveys the meaning of a Subjunctive, or Potential. By the Attick writers it is sometimes used to express those contingencies that depend on the human will.*—In Latin, there is no need of an Optative; wishes being signified by the Subjunctive modified by certain auxiliaries expressed or understood: as *Utinam sciperes* (that is, *Opto ut, uti, or utinam sciperes*) “ I wish that

* Origin and Progress of Language.

"you were wise:" *O si Jupiter referat præteritos annos* (that is, *O quantum gauderem*, or *O quantum proficeret, si Jupiter, &c.*)
 "O that Jupiter, (or I wish that Jupiter)
 "would restore the years that are past:"
Sis bonus felixque tuis; where *utinam* is understood, or *Precor ut sis bonus, &c.* Similar contrivances take place in other tongues.

As to the Potential mood, it may, I think, in all cases, be resolved into either the Indicative or the Subjunctive: and therefore, and because in Latin and Greek it is not marked by any peculiar inflection of the verb, I do not consider it as essential to language, or as worthy of being distinguished in Grammar by a particular name. "I may go," is the same with "It is in my power to go;" which is a positive and absolute affirmation, requiring a verb of the indicative mood. "He should have gone," appears to be equally absolute, when resolved thus, "It was his duty to go." And in like manner, "He would have gone," is nothing more than, "He was willing to go." And "I might have been consulted," is not materially different from, "It was in the power of others to have consulted me." In these examples, the Potential coincides with the Indicative.—And in the following passage from Horace,

*Sed tacitus pasci si posset corvus, haberet
 Plus dapis—*

the

the last clause, which is commonly referred to the Potential, may be resolved into the indicative and subjunctive thus: *Si corvus posset pasci tacitus, ita res est, or fieri potest, ut haberet plus dapis*; which is a sentence consisting of one absolute affirmation, or indicative verb, and of two subordinate or relative clauses, in both which the mood is subjunctive.

The Imperative Mood seems to be only an elliptical way of expressing that, which implies absolute affirmation, and which therefore might be with equal clearness, though not with equal brevity, expressed by the Indicative. "Go thou," is the same in meaning with, "I command, or I intreat thee to go:" "Spare us, good Lord," may be resolved into, "We beseech thee, good Lord, to spare us."

The Infinitive may be called, if you please, *the infinitive, indefinite, or impersonal form of the verb*: but a mood it certainly is not; because it implies no mental energy, or intention. Nay, if the essential character of the verb be, what it has been proved to be, to express Affirmation, it will follow, that the infinitive is not even a part of the verb. For it expresses no affirmation; it has no reference to persons or substances; it forms no compleat sentence by itself, nor even when joined to a noun, unless it be aided by some *real* part of a verb either expressed or understood.

stood. *Lego, legebam, legi, legeram, legam*, I read, I was reading, I have read, I had read, I shall read, do, each of them, amount to a compleat affirmative sentence: but *legere*, to read, *legisse*, to have read, *lecturum esse*, to be about to read, affirm nothing, and are not more applicable to any one person, than to any other.

But, though the Infinitive is no part of the verb, even as the ground whereon the house stands is no part of the building, it may be considered as the foundation of the whole verb; because it expresses the simple attribute, on which, by means of inflections and auxiliary words, the authors of language have reared that vast fabrick of moods and tenses, whereby are signified so many varieties of affirmation, and action, of time, person, and number. And this attribute it expresses abstractly, as something capable of being characterised by qualities, or made the subject of a proposition; which comes so near the description of a noun, that in most languages it may be used, and frequently is used, as a noun: whence some antient grammarians called it, *the verbal noun*, or, more properly, *the noun of the verb*. *

* Non inepte hic modus (Infinitivus) a veteribus quibundam Verbi Nomen est appellatum. Est enim (si non vere ac semper, quod nonnulli volunt, Nomen Substantivum) significatione certe ei maxime affinis; ejusque vices sustinet per omnes casus. Ruddiman. Gram. major. par. ii. p. 217.

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Thus *Scire tuum nihil est* * is the same with *Scientia tua nihil est*; and *Reddes dulce loqui, reddes ridere decorum*, is equally elegant and expressive with, *Reddes dulcem loquelam, reddes decorum risum* †. Thus, in English, we may say, “*Death is certain*,” or “*To die is certain*,” “*He loves learning*,” or “*He loves to learn*.”—In some languages, particularly the Italian and Greek, the article is prefixed to these infinitive nouns; which, if possible, makes their substantive nature still more apparent; as *Il mangiare*, the eating; *l’essere*, the being: ‡ *To philosophēin boulomai ēper to ploutein*, I choose to philosophize rather than to be rich; which is the same with, I choose *philosophy* rather than *riches*. But to such infinitives we do not prefix the article in English, because custom has so determined; nor in Latin, because that language has no article ||. In the Classick tongues, they supply the place of all the cases: in English, they may go before a verb, as nominatives, as “*To learn is desirable*,” or after it, as accusatives, as “*I desire to learn*,” but they never follow a preposition, so far as I recollect, except in one passage of Spenser, which, being contrary to idiom, or at least obsolete, is not to be imitated:

* Persius.

† Horace.

‡ *Τὸ φιλοσοφῆν βουλόμεναι ἔπερ τὸ πλουτεῖν.*|| Pronominal articles are sometimes joined to these infinitives in Latin: as, *Cum videre ipsum turpe sit nobis. Totum hoc displicet philosophari.* Cicero.

For not to have been dipt in Lethe lake,
 Could save the son of Thetis *from to die*:
 that is, The having been dipt in Lethe could
 not save the son of Thetis *from death*.

Some authors will have it, that there are also in language an Interrogative mood, expressing a desire of verbal information; and a Requisite, expressing a desire of being assisted or gratified. And this last they subdivide into two species, the Precative, when we address a superiour, and the Imperative, when we command an inferiour. But such a multiplying of moods appears to be unnecessary. The Requisite differs not *in form* from the Imperative *. The Interrogative is commonly expressed, not by any form of the verb contrived on purpose, but by a particular arrangement of the words, as *It is so*: *Is it so?*—or by the addition of some particle, as *Est verum: esse verum?* or merely by a change in the emphasis or tone of the speaker, as, *I did so*: *You did?* meaning, Did you so indeed?—And it is well observed, by the learned and accurate Ruddiman, “that if we will
 “ constitute as many moods, as there are
 “ various modifications wherewith a verb or
 “ affirmation may be affected, we must multiply them to a very great number; and,
 “ besides the Indicative, Subjunctive, Poten-

* In Hebrew, an earnest request is signified by adding to the Imperative the particle *na*; as *H-fanna, Save, I beseech thee*.

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“ tial, Optative, Imperative, and Interrogative, have also a Permissive, an Hortative, a Precative, a Concessive, a Mandative, a mode to express volition, and another to signify duty :”—which, instead of improving the grammatical art, would only render it the more confused and difficult, without adding any thing to the regularity or significance of language.

Since, then, it appears, that the Potential may be resolved into the Indicative and Subjunctive; that the Optative is superfluous, being, even in Greek, a sort of Subjunctive; that the Imperative is an Elliptical form of the Indicative; that the Infinitive is no mood at all; and that the other supposed moods abovementioned have no real foundation in language, nor claim any particular notice from the Grammarian;—it seems to follow, that to verbs, considered as expressive of affirmation, two moods only are *necessary*; the Indicative, to signify *affirmation absolute*; and the Subjunctive, to denote *affirmation relative, dependent, or conditional*. Indeed it is not easy to conceive any mode of affirmation, which may not be resolved into one or other of these two. And, in the Latin tongue, which is not defective in this particular, there are, properly speaking, no more than three moods, the Indicative, Subjunctive, and Imperative; which last I shall allow to be a mood, (as it is found in so many languages) though not a necessary one.—As to the Infinitive, it is impossible

impossible to prove, by any just reasoning, that it has any title to the name of mood, or even to be considered as a part of the verb.

In fact, we might repeat, in regard to Moods, a remark formerly made on the degrees of comparison of adjectives. Their number is in nature indefinite: but as nothing in language can be so, it is more convenient to reduce them to two or three, which by means of auxiliary words may be sufficient to comprehend them all, than vainly to endeavour to provide an adjective for every possible degree of comparison, or a mood for each particular energy of mind that may give a character to affirmation.

That I may not be thought more paradoxical than others, in what has been advanced on this subject, I shall conclude it with observing, that Perizonius reduces the moods of a finite verb to three, the Indicative, Subjunctive, and Imperative; that Rudiman includes the Optative and Potential in the Subjunctive; that the learned author of an *Essay on the Origin and progress of language* admits, with me, only two moods of affirmation; that Scaliger denies that moods are necessary to the verb; and that Sanctius explodes them altogether, as having no natural connection with it,

And

And in behalf of this opinion of Sanctius and Scaliger many plausible things might be said. The moods seem reducible to two, the Indicative and Subjunctive. Every scholar knows, that a considerable part of the elegance of the Latin verb arises from the right application of them; and that, if in Cicero, Cesar, and Virgil (for example) the tenses of the latter were to be changed into the corresponding tenses of the former, the language would appear even uncouth in the sound, as well as inaccurate with respect to the sense. But it may be questioned, whether this is not in part the effect of habit. We have always been accustomed to Subjunctive tenses in Latin; and can hardly conceive that it would be intelligible without them. And that without them it would not be elegant, is allowed. But, setting elegance aside, and independently on the habits acquired in reading the classics, might we not, in one way or other, express every necessary affirmation, by means of the Indicative only? Certain it is that, in many cases, if the laws of syntax would permit, the sense would not hinder us from using that mood instead of the other. In vulgar English, as already observed, this is done every moment, without any other inconvenience, than that of offending the critick, and gradually corrupting the purity of our tongue. Nay, there is reason to think, that many people now speak and write English, without ever using a Subjunctive,

tive, (except *would*, *could*, and some other auxiliaries) or knowing that there is such a thing in the language. Even the Latin Grammarian allows, of certain conjunctions, that they may govern either of these moods. And where the rule for the use of the Subjunctive is more determinate, as in sentences like the following, *Nescio an bonus sit*, I know not whether he *be* good, the Indicative *might*, without ambiguity, express the meaning, *Nescio an bonus est*, I know not whether he *is* good.

If then the Subjunctive, however ornamental and useful, is not to be reckoned among the necessities of social life, we need not be surprised, that in Hebrew, in which simplicity is more studied than ornament, the moods should be only two, the Indicative and Imperative. The Infinitive, indeed, is named as a third mood in the grammar of the language; but that is in compliance with the erroneous practice of other grammarians.

GERUNDS and SUPINES are of great importance in Latin; but being in a manner peculiar to that language, it belongs not to Universal Grammar to consider them particularly. Yet a remark or two on the subject may not be improper.

The *Gerund* is a noun derived from the verb; but is no part of the verb, because in
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itself it does not possess the power of affirmation. It has two distinct offices. When in the nominative case it is joined to *est* with a dative, or in the accusative to *esse* with a dative, it denotes necessity or duty: as *moriendum est mihi*, I must die; *Scio moriendum esse mihi*, I know that I must die: *Vivendum est mihi recte*, I ought to live honestly; *Fateor vivendum esse mihi recte*, I confess that I ought to live honestly. In this use, it is properly called a *gerund*; for that word implies, that something must be, or is to be, or ought to be, done. And there is in Greek a sort of participial adverb, sometimes called the adverb of position, which expresses the meaning of this gerund, as * *Iteon moi*, *Eundum est mihi*, I must go: † *oisteon kai elpisteon*, *ferendum et sperandum est*, we ought to endure and to hope. In English, and other modern languages, there is nothing correspondent to this gerund; its place being supplied by an auxiliary verb, of duty, *ought*, or of necessity, *must*.

In another view, the Latin gerund is a verbal substantive, approaching in signification to that of the infinitive noun; but having this advantage over the Latin infinitive, that it admits of terminations to mark its cases, and coincides more easily in syntax with nouns and adjectives. Examples may

* *Iteon moi*.† *Iteon moi elpisteon*.

be seen in the Latin grammar. In Greek this sort of Gerund is the less necessary, because the infinitive itself may be resolved into cases, by means of the neuter article: as, * *ek tou oran gignetai to eran*, of seeing comes loving; † *to ploutein estin en tō chrēsthai*, Being rich consists in using. We have in English a verbal noun, of the same form with our active participle, which noun coincides in meaning with this Latin gerund: as, he is incapable *of writing*, he is addicted *to writing*, he *practises writing*, he is fatigued *with writing*.

From the infinitive of the Hebrew, by means of certain prefixed letters, (which are indeed contracted prepositions) are formed four words called Gerunds; which are very serviceable in that language, and sometimes supply the place of what in other tongues we term the plusquamperfect tense, and Subjunctive mood. Thus from *masor*, *tradere*, are formed *bemsor*, *in tradendo*; *chimfor*, *cum tradidissim*, &c.; *limfor*, *ad tradendum*; *mimfor*, *a tradendo*. This somewhat resembles the use, which, in Greek, by the help of prepositions and the neuter article, may be made of the infinitive taken as a noun.

The origin of the word *Supine*, as a term in grammar, has given rise to several con-

* *ek tou oran gignetai to eran.*
 † *to ploutein estin en tō chrēsthai.*

jectures.

jectures. Sanctius, who never hesitates, is of opinion, that the word so called is an emblem of a supine or indolent man: for that, as the business of such a man must be done by others, so the office of the *supine* may be executed by various other phrases; *discedo lectum*, for example, by *discedo lecturus*, by *discedo ad legendum*, and by *discedo ut legam*. Priscian thinks, not less whimsically, that the Supine, being placed in grammars at the bottom of the verb, seems to support the whole weight of the conjugation; like a man lying *supine*, or with his face upwards, and pressed down to the earth by a huge pile of burdens. — But however mysterious their name may be, the nature of the two Latin supines is very well understood. Like the gerunds, they are no parts of the verb, but verbal nouns; the first ending in *um*, which is always of the accusative case, governed by *ad* understood, and preceded by a verb of motion; and the second in *u*, which is always of the ablative, governed by *in* understood, and preceded by an adjective: as *abiit (ad) deambulatum*; *facile (in) dictu*. So they are explained by the most accurate of all Latin Grammarians, Ruddiman.

I shall now give some account of the several species or sorts of verbs, and so conclude this part of the subject.

In all the languages I know, and probably in all others, Verbs are of different sorts.

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Exclusive of the verb of existence, which is of a peculiar character, and has been already described, they may all be divided into Active, Passive, and Neuter.

1. As human affairs depend upon Action, and as human speech is employed on human affairs, it must happen, in all possible conditions wherein we can be placed, that affirmations will often be made in regard to actions. Verbs, therefore, which affirm concerning action, and which are called *Active*, there must be in all languages; as *I love, thou blamest, he strikes, they pursue.*

2. Every created being that *acts* is liable to be acted upon: and what we suffer, or feel, from being acted upon, that is, from being the *subjects* or the *objects* of action, must be of great importance to life and happiness, and therefore cannot fail to be spoken of, under the form of affirmation, and so render *Passive* verbs necessary; as *thou art loved, I was blamed, he is stricken, they are pursued.* In the *Classick* tongues, the greatest part of the passive Verb (or Passive Voice, as it is also called) is formed from the active, by a change of termination; as *amor*, I am loved, from *amo*, I love; * *tuptomai*, I am beaten, from † *tuptō*, I beat. But, in the modern tongues of Europe, the Passive verb is made up of the participle passive, expressing the attribute,

* *τυπώμαι*.† *τυπώω*.

and

and of the verb of existence denoting the affirmation and the time; as *Amor, I am loved*; *Culpabitur, he will be blamed*.

When the name of the being that acts, or the pronoun which stands for that name, leads the sentence, the verb, assuming its nature, is active; as *Cæsar subegit Galliam*, Cæsar subdued Gaul. When the being which is acted upon, that is, when the subject, or when the object of the action, leads the sentence, the verb is Passive, as *Gallia subacta est a Cæsare*, Gaul was subdued by Cæsar.

I distinguished between the subject, and the object, of an action; and there is reason for doing so in this place. The *subject* of an action is affected by the action; the *object* of the action is not so affected. Thus, when I say, I hear a sound, I see a man, *man* and *sound* are the *objects*; and when I say, I build an house, I break a stone, *house* and *stone* are the *subjects*, of the action. The first is called *intentional* action, the second is called *real*. Both are expressed by active verbs. For, though in the actions called intentional we are partly passive, because an impression is made upon us; yet there is an energy on our part, as we may exert our will and employ our organs, for the purpose, either of receiving that impression, or of excluding it.

Active verbs are subdivided into *Transitive* and *Intransitive*. An active transitive verb is so called, because the action signified by it *passes from* the agent (*transit*) towards some other person or thing; as, I *see* a man, I *build* an house. This verb, therefore, is naturally placed between two substantives; the first denoting the agent, which is of the nominative case, because there is nothing to make it of any other; and the second, denoting the person or thing, towards which the action is exerted; and which, in languages that have cases, is commonly of the accusative, though sometimes also of the genitive, the dative, or the ablative, according to the arbitrary rules of the language; as, *Potitur rerum, favet amico, utitur fraude*. —In the modern tongues, which have little or no variety of cases, that which acts is naturally put before the verb, (for the agent is always prior to the action, as the cause to the effect) and that which is acted upon is put after the verb; as, Achilles *slew* Hector: and, in allusion to the terms of Greek and Latin grammar, we call the first the nominative, and the last the accusative; though they derive these names, not from their inflection (for they have none), but merely from their position, or from their dependence upon the verb. Sometimes, however, where the sense cannot be mistaken, or where we have an oblique case, we may change this order, for the sake of harmony,

of

of energy, or of variety ; and put the nominative after the accusative, or even after the verb : as, Him they slew ; Me they insulted ; Created thing nor valued he, nor thun'd.

When one acts upon, or towards, any object, that object is Passive in regard to the action : and, therefore, all these active transitive verbs may be changed into passives, when that which is acted upon leads the sentence ; as *Ego laudo te*, I praise thee ; *Tu laudaris a me*, thou art praised by me.

An Active *Intransitive* verb is that whose action *does not pass* from the agent to any other person or thing ; as I live, I run, I walk. This sort of verb cannot properly take an accusative after it, because the actions have nothing exterior to the agent upon which they can be said to be exerted ; nor, consequently, can it be changed into a passive, because, where actions are not exerted upon, or towards, any thing, there is nothing passive in regard to those actions.—Intransitive verbs are by most authors called *Neuter*, that is *neither* active nor passive ; but I think with very little propriety. Passive indeed they are not ; but surely it will not be pretended, that in running, walking, flying, &c. there is no action.—When they take an accusative after them, as *vivere vitam felicem*, to live a happy life ; *ire longam viam*, to go a long journey, they put off the Intransitive character, and are to be referred to the other class of active verbs ;

verbs; and their place may be supplied by verbs transitive. Thus, to *live* a happy life, *vivere vitam felicem*, is the same with *degere vitam felicem*, to *lead* a happy life: and, to *go* a long journey, is the same with, to *perform* a long journey.

3. That is properly a *Neuter* verb, which affirms neither action nor passion; but simply denotes the state, posture, or quality, of things or persons; as *Sto*, I stand; *manes*, thou remainest; *dormit*, he sleeps; *floremus*, we are flourishing; *albetis*, ye are white; *mortui sunt*, they are dead. It is obvious, that these verbs, like those of the former species, can neither take accusatives after them, nor be transformed into passives; because, where there is no action, nothing can be acted upon. True it is, that in some languages, both neuter and intransitive verbs are used in the passive *impersonally*: but this is an idiom depending, not on the nature of things, but on the arbitrary rules of those languages; and besides, when this is done, whatever the *form* of the verb may be, the *signification* is not necessarily passive. Thus *fiatur* may mean *flant*; *curritur*, *currunt*; *turbatur*, *est turba*; *pugatur*, *pugnant*.

These, I think, are all the sorts of verbs that are necessary in language, and, consequently, all that Universal Grammar has to consider. But, in the Greek and Latin grammars, other kinds of verbs are specified; which

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which I shall give some account of, though a very brief one. For, first, they do not properly come within my plan; and secondly, they may all, in respect of signification, be referred to one or other of the classes already mentioned.

When the same being that acts is also the subject or object of the action, the verb may be called *Middle*; as *Acteon saw himself* in the stream, *Cato slew himself*. This, in most languages, may be expressed by an active verb governing the reciprocal pronoun: but, antiently, it seems, the Greeks expressed it by a particular series of inflections, that have been called by Grammarians *the middle voice*. Few examples, however, of reciprocal action signified by this middle verb, can now be produced, except from the earliest authors *. In latter times, it came to resemble the Deponent of the Latins; having a signification purely active, though, in some tenses, a passive termination.

The Hebrews have a form of the verb, or, as it is called, a Conjugation, which resembles in its use the old middle verb of the Greek tongue. Those of their Grammarians, who reject the vowel-points as a rabbinical and modern invention, reduce the

* See Hom. II. iii. 141. xiii. 168. Odyss. v. 491. ix. 296.

conjugations to five, which they name *Kal*, *Niphal*, *Hipbil*, *Hopbal*, and *Hithpacl*. These five may be reduced to three; for *Kal* and *Niphal* are but the active and passive voices of the same verb; and so are *Hipbil* and *Hopbal*. *Hithpacl* has no passive.

In *Kal* we have the primitive verb, as *masar*, *tradidit*, *be delivered*: for, among the Hebrews, the third person singular of the preterit is the root of the verb. In *Hipbil* something of Causation is implied; as *bimsir*, *tradere fecit*, *be caused to deliver*.

Hithpacl is the form, that corresponds to the old Greek middle verb: as *bithmaser*, *tradidit se*, *be delivered himself*. This at least is its most common signification. In neuter verbs, however, it differs not materially from the conjugation *Kal*: *balach* and *bithbalach* both signify *ambulavit*, *be walked*. And sometimes it emphatically expresses *assuming the appearance* of a character without the reality. "There is, says Solomon, *mith-gb-sber*, that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is *mitbrosb-sb*, that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches."

It may be remarked here, though foreign from the subject, that in certain English neuter verbs of Semitic origin something is discernible, not unlike the analogy of the He-

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Hebrew conjugations *Kal* and *Hipbil*. *To sit, to lie* *, *to rise, to writhe, to fall*, are neuters, that might be referred to the former conjugation; to which correspond the following actives in *Hipbil*, *To set, to lay* *, *to raise, to wreath, to fell*, that is, *to cause to sit, to*

* Is it not strange, that, in the present language of England, not only in conversation, but even in some printed books of considerable name, the neuter *to lie*, and the active *to lay* should be so frequently confounded; and that, instead of *he lies* on the ground, and *he lay* on the ground, it should be said *he lays*, and *he laid*? Would not a man of education be ashamed to be found ignorant of the difference between an active and a neuter verb? Or could he think it creditable to mistake *jecit, he threw*, for *jacuit, he lay*? Yet this vulgar idiom is not less barbarous. If the humour of confounding active verbs with neuter should continue to prevail, we may soon expect to see, and to hear, sentences like the following: “*I laid* in bed till eight; then *I raised*, and *set* a while in a chair; “*when on a sudden a qualm came on, and I felled* upon my face.”—Our life must come to an end; but let us live as long as we can: our language may alter; but let us wish it permanent, and do our best to make it so.

Pope has in one place, for the sake of a rhyme, admitted this barbarism. Priam, *lying* at Achilles's feet, says, *Iliad* xxiv,

For him, through hostile camps I bent my way,
For him, thus prostrate at thy feet I lay;

which is the more provoking, because it is in one of the finest passages of the poem, and in a passage where, in general though not throughout, the Translator has the honour to outdo his original. It might have been easily avoided.

For him, through hostile camps I pass'd, and here
Prostrate before thee in the dust appear.

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cause to lie, to cause to rise, to cause to writhe, to cause to fall.

Inceptive verbs are appropriated to the beginnings of action, or rather of condition; as *caleſco*, I begin to be warm; *tumeſco*, I begin to ſwell. In Latin, they are often productive of elegance, by preventing circumlocution; but they are not found in the Greek, nor are they neceſſary in any language.

Equally unneceſſary, though not leſs elegant, are the Greek and Latin *Deſideratives*, which ſignify deſire; as * *brôſeiô*, *eſurio*, I deſire to eat; † *polemeſeiô*, *bellaturio*, I have a deſire to go to war.

Deponent verbs, which with an active ſignification have a paſſive termination, as *loquor*, I ſpeak; and *Neutral-paſſive* verbs, which have an active termination and a paſſive ſignification, as *vapulare*, to be whipped, *veneunt*, they are ſold, are not uncommon in the Latin tongue. The former are ſaid to have their name from *deponere*; becauſe they lay aſide that paſſive ſenſe, which one would expect from their final ſyllables.—The verb *liceo* is a very ſingular one; for with an active termination it has a paſſive ſenſe, and with a paſſive termination an active ſenſe: *Liceor* means, I offer a price; and *Liceo*, I am valued or ſet at a price.

* *βρῶσκειν.*

† *πολεμῶμαι.*

The Latin *Frequentative* verb denotes frequency: as *pulso*, I strike often, which is an active transitive; *curfiso*, I run often, which is an active intransitive; and *dormito*, I sleep often, which is neuter. This verb is not necessary; but, like the inceptive and the desiderative, it contributes something to that elegant conciseness, which is so peculiarly the character of the Roman language.

Impersonal verbs are used only in the third person singular; and in Greek, Latin, and Italian, never appear with a nominative before them: as * *dei, oportet*; *exest, licet*; *bast, it is enough*; the person, concerning whom they affirm, being expressed by an oblique case dependent on the verb; as *interest omnium*, all are concerned; *licet tibi*, you may, or it is allowed you; *penitet me*, I repent; *mi bast, it is sufficient for me*. The English verbs, *it beboves, it irketh, it becomes*, are also called *Impersonal* by our Grammarians; and do indeed resemble the Greek and Latin impersonals in two respects, that they are only used in the third person singular; and that they express the person, concerning whom they affirm, by a subsequent or dependent oblique case: for we cannot say, *I bebove, or thou bebovest*; but we say, *It beboves me, it beboves thee*. But these English impersonals differ from the antient in this, that they have always before them
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a nominative expressed : for, *beboves me, irks me, becomes me*, without the pronoun *it* prefixed, are not according to the English idiom.

It has been disputed, whether the Greek and Latin Impersonal verbs are always dependent on a nominative understood or expressed : and by very able Grammarians the matter has been decided in the affirmative. Thus, to *refert omnium, negotium* or *res* is the supposed nominative : and *delectat me studere* seems to be nothing different from *studere delectat me* ; where *studere*, the infinitive noun, is properly the nominative to *delectat*. The controversy is foreign from my purpose, and therefore I will not enter upon it. I shall only observe, that among the Latin Grammarians it was carried on with a vehemence that is ridiculous enough. Priscian had said, that all Impersonal verbs are really Personals, because they have nominatives, which, whether expressed or not, are still implied. He was answered by Augustinus Saturnius, in the following terms : “ May the Gods confound you, Priscian, “ together with that same doctrine of yours ” —and he goes on to urge his objections. “ Nay but,” replies Sanctius, “ may the “ Gods confound you, Augustine, together “ with those cavillings of yours ; for I do “ maintain, that Priscian is in the right : ” — which in the sequel he endeavours to prove.

8

Ruddiman,

Ruddiman, who had more sense, as well as more temper, than any of these wise men, observes very coolly and properly, that, whatever be determined concerning the supposed nominative of impersonal verbs, this we are sure of, that it never can be a *person*, but must always be a *thing*: for which reason, the verbs in question are called *Impersonal*; a name, that conveys a pretty just idea of their nature.

S E C T. V.

The Subject continued.—Further Remarks on the Participle.

THAT the Participle expresses a quality or attribute with time, has more than once been taken for granted in the course of this investigation, and is generally admitted by Grammarians. Ruddiman, one of the most cautious of them, declares it to be essential to the Participle, first, that it come immediately from a verb, and, secondly, that in its signification it include time. And therefore, continues he, *larvatus*, masked, is not a participle, because it comes from a noun, and not from a verb; and *tacitus*, silent, though it comes from a verb, is not a participle, because it does not signify time*. And all the writers on Universal Grammar that I am acquainted with concur in the same doctrine.

And this is, perhaps, the most convenient light, in which the Participle can be considered in Universal Grammar: for it is not easy, nor, I believe, possible, to describe it more minutely, without entering into the idioms of individual tongues. In fact, the

* Rudiments of the Latin tongue, page 62.

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participles of some languages differ widely in their nature from those of others: and even, of one and the same language, some participles seem to be of one character, and some of another.

1. As the first Grammarians drew all their ideas from the Greek tongue, in which there are participles correspondent to the present, preterit, and future tenses; it was natural for them to suppose present time to be included in the participle of present time (as it is called), past time in the preterit participles, and future time in the participles of the future. And this being once supposed by the acuteſt of all Grammarians, the Greek, might naturally be admitted unexamined, or but ſlightly examined, by their brethren of other countries, and of latter ages.

But the Greek participles of the preſent do not always expreſs preſent time; nor is paſt time always referred to by their preterit participles: nay, on ſome occaſions, time ſeems not to be ſignified at all, by either the former, or the latter. When Cebes ſays, *Etunchanomen peripatountes en tō tou Chronou hierō **, We were walking in the temple of Saturn, the participle of the preſent, *walking*, is by means of the verb, *were*, applied to time paſt, (which an adjective in the ſame connection might have been); and therefore of

* *Εν τῷ χρόνῳ περιπατοῦντες ἐν τῷ τοῦ χρόνου ἱερῷ.*

itself cannot be understood to signify any sort of time. If one choose to affirm, that the participle thus applied must signify time: then the words *at a walk*, or the adjective *merry*, must also signify time, when it is said, We were *at a walk* in the meadow, or, We were *merry* in the meadow;—which no body, I think, will maintain.—Again, When we read in the Gospel, *Ho πιστευας σωβησεται* *, the participle belongs to the aorist of past time, and the verb is of future time; yet we must not render it, “He who believed shall be saved:” for it appears from the context, that the believing here spoken of is considered as posteriour in time to the enunciation of the promise. Here, therefore, the participle loses the signification of past time: and may be rendered, by the indefinite present, “He *who believeth* shall be saved;” or by the future, (which often coincides in meaning with the indefinite present) “He *who will believe* shall be saved;” or merely by a noun, which in its signification is not connected with time, “*The believer* shall be saved.”—Can it be said then, that the participle in this place necessarily implies any signification of time, when we see, that its full import may be expressed, either by present, or by future time, or without any reference to time past, present, or future?—Greek, as well as Latin and English, parti-

* Ο ΠΙΣΤΕΥΩΝ ΣΩΒΗΣΕΤΑΙ. See Mark xv. 16.

ciples, often take the signification of nouns, and consequently lose that of time: as * *ho peirazôn*, the tempter, *ho kektêmenos* †, the master, or proprietor.

2. In Latin, the future participle of the active verb does indeed express future time: *Scripturus*, about to write. But the future participle of the passive, in *dus*, “does not so much import futurity” (I quote the words of Ruddiman) “as necessity, duty, or merit. For there is a great difference between these two sentences, *Dicit literas a se scriptum iri*, and *Dicit literas a se scribendas esse*; the first signifying, that a letter will be written by him, or that he will write a letter; and the second, that a letter must be written by him, or that he is obliged to write a letter. For (continues our Author) though Sanctius and Melf. de Port Royal contend, that this participle is *sometimes* used for simple futurity, yet I think, that Perizonius and Johnson have clearly evinced the contrary:” ‡—that is, I presume, that it is never used for simple futurity.

The Latin active participle of present time is frequently used to denote a quality simply, and as it is at all times, or without reference to any particular time; in which

* ὁ πειράζων.

† ὁ κεκτήμενος.

‡ Rudiments of the Latin tongue, page 47.

case, it assumes the nature of an adjective, or perhaps even of a noun: as *amans æqui*, a lover of equity; or, one whose general character it is at all times, that he loves equity.

The Latin passive participle of past time (as it is called) may likewise, by losing all signification of time, become an adjective; as in the words *doctus*, *eruditus*, *spectatus*, *probatus*, &c.: and is sometimes, by means of the substantive verb, applied even to future time in that tense, which is commonly called *the future of the subjunctive*, but which ought to be called *the future perfect of the indicative*: *amatus fuero*, I shall have been loved.

It appears then, that of the Greek and Latin Participle it is not enough to say, that "it is a word derived from a verb, " and denoting an attribute with some signification of time." But this definition will be found still more inadequate, when applied to the participles of the modern languages.

3. In English (and what is said of the English participle will in general hold true of the French and Italian):—in English, I say, we have but two simple participles; which are here exemplified by *writing*, and *written*. For *about to write*, or *going to write*, is a complex, and indeed a figurative, way

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way of expressing the import of a Latin and Greek participle, *grapsen*, and *scripturus*.

The first, *Writing*, is the participle of the active verb; the other, *Written*, is the participle of the passive: *I am writing* a paragraph; but *it is not yet written*. It may be added, that the former signifies *imperfect action*, or action begun and not ended; *I am writing* a sentence: and that the latter signifies *action complete, perfect, or finished*; the sentence *is written*.—This appears to be a less exceptionable way of distinguishing them, than if it had been said, that the former expresses *present time*, and the latter *time past*.

But, of itself, does not the first denote present, and the second past, time? I answer, No. Let us examine them in their order.

By the first participle, *Writing*, when joined to a verb of present time, present action is no doubt signified: but it is signified, not by the participle, but by the tense of the verb; for the same participle, joined to a verb of a different tense, may denote either past or future action;—we may say, not only *I am writing*, but also, *I was writing* yesterday, and *I shall be writing* tomorrow. Nor let it be suspected, that this par-

participle varies its time, when joined to the substantive verb only. It may be joined to other verbs, and still admit the same variety: he *went* away *muttering*; he *will* return *smiling*; he *walks* about *meditating*.

The second, *Written*, which I call the passive participle, may be thought to be naturally enough referred to past time, because it expresses complete action: for an action is certainly past, when it is completed. But this participle may, for all that, be referred to present time, and to future, as well as to past. The letter *is* now *written*: it *was* *written* yesterday: it *will be* *written* tomorrow. Is not the time, in these examples, signified by the verb *is*, *was*, and *will be*, as really as in the following; the sea *is* now *calm*: it *was* *calm* yesterday: it *will be* *calm* tomorrow? If then, in the former sentences, the participle *written* signify an attribute with time, the adjective *calm*, in the latter examples, must also signify an attribute with time: in which case, it will be difficult to distinguish between the nature of the adjective, and that of the participle. But, suppose the participle *written* to be *passive*, and to signify *complete action*; and it may, in its nature, be easily distinguished from the adjective *calm*, which does not imply either *action received*, or *action complete*.

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But if *Written* be a passive participle, why do we meet with it in the compound tenses of the active verb; in the preterperfect, *I have written*; in the plusquamperfect, *I had written*; and in the future perfect, *I shall have written*? This question will not appear of hard solution, if we vary a little the order of these auxiliaries. Instead, then, of, *I have written a letter, I had written a letter, and I shall have written a letter*, say, *I had a letter written, I have a letter written, and, I shall have a letter written*; an order, which, on some occasions, and on subjects that admit a more harmonious phraseology, might be tolerated in verse: and it will appear, that the participle *written* belongs, not to the nominative *I*, the person *who acts*, but to the accusative *letter*, the thing *acted upon*, or (to give it in other words) the thing which in respect of the action is *passive*.

That this is a true state of the case, and no arbitrary supposition, may appear from the analogy of other modern languages. In French, wherever the participle is *declined*, it agrees in gender and number, not with the agent, but with the thing acted upon: as, *La barangue que j'ai faite*, and, *Les vers que j'ai faits*; not *fait* in either case. The same holds in Italian. *

* So in Diodati's Bible. Genes. iii. 12, 13. Ed Adamo disse, *La donna che tu hai posta meco*, &c.—E la Donna rispose, *I serpente m' ha seddotta*, &c.

If it be asked, whence this mode of speaking could take its rise; it may be answered, that in the barbarous Latin used in the eleventh and twelfth centuries (when the modern tongues began to assume their present form) it was not uncommon, instead of *Amavi illum*, I have loved him, and *Scripti literas*, I have written the letter, to say *Habeo illum amatum*, and *Habeo scriptas literas*. The new languages adopted the idiom. Or perhaps the idiom passed from the new languages into the barbarous Latin of that time.

As the passive participle *written*, when combined with the active auxiliaries *have* and *had*, supplies tenses in the active verb, I have written, I shall have written, I had written: so, when combined with the active participle *having*, the same passive participle forms an active preterperfect participle. For *having written* is as really such in English, as * *γεγραπὸς* is in Greek. And this, being further combined with the perfect participle of the substantive verb *been*, supplies a preterperfect passive participle, *having been written*, which exactly corresponds to the Greek *γεγραμμένος* †. The same perfect participle passive *written*, joined with the imperfect active participle of the substantive verb, *being*, makes a present perfect participle pas-

* *γεγραπὸς*.

† *γεγραμμένος*.

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five, *being written*, which gives the meaning of the Greek * *graphomenos*.

One of the greatest defects in the English tongue, with regard to this part of speech, seems to be the want of an *imperfect passive participle*. For example: If it be asked, What is your friend doing? and answered, He *is building* a house; this is right: for the imperfect active participle, with the present tense of the substantive verb, expresses properly enough *action just now going on, but not finished*. But if to the question, Is your friend's house built? the answer, which is not uncommon, be given, No, but it is building; this is not right, because a passive sense is signified by an active participle. We must, therefore, in this case, if we would speak grammatically, vary the phrase, and say, No, but he is building it; or something to that purpose.

In old English, this defect was sometimes supplied by prefixing the preposition *in* to the active participle: as, "Forty and six years was this temple *in building*." But this would now appear formal; and indeed, in the case supposed, hardly intelligible: The house is not built, but it is *in building*.

In the original Greek, of the passage quoted in the last paragraph from the second

* *γραφόμενος*.

chapter of St. John's Gospel, the verb is of the first aorist passive; which, it seems, might signify imperfect and continued action, as well as indefinite past time. In Latin, it might be rendered, according to the idea which our Translators must have had of it, *Quadraginta et sex annos hoc templum ædificabatur*. For that this is the true grammatical sense of the imperfect passive, though not always adhered to by Roman writers, we have the authority of Ruddiman.*

If

* The indicative tenses of the Passive Latin verb are thus distinguished by that most accurate Grammarian.—
 “ Let the subject of discourse be the building of a house.
 “ 1. When I say *Domus ædificatur*, I mean that it is just
 “ now a building, but not finished. 2. When *Ædifi-*
 “ *cabatur*, that it was then, or at a certain past time,
 “ a building, but not then finished. 3. *Ædificabitur*,
 “ that some time hence it shall be a building, without any
 “ formal regard to the finishing of it.—But when I make
 “ use of the *Participle perfect*, I always signify a thing
 “ completed and ended: but with these subdivisions.
 “ 1. By *Ædificata est*, I mean simply, that it is finished;
 “ without any regard to the time when. 2. *Ædificata*
 “ *fuit*, it is finished; and some time since has intervened.
 “ 3. *Ædificata erat*, it was finished at a certain past time
 “ referred to, with which it was contemporary. 4. *Ædi-*
 “ *ficata fuerat*; it was finished before a certain past time
 “ referred to, to which it was prior. 5. *Ædificata erit*,
 “ it shall be finished some time hereafter, either without
 “ regard to a particular time when; or with respect to
 “ a certain time yet future, with which its finishing shall
 “ be contemporary. 6. *Ædificata fuerit*, it shall be finished
 “ and pass before another thing yet future, to which its
 “ finishing shall be prior.”—The Author then goes on to
 show, which he does in a very ingenious and satisfactory
 manner,

If the Participle essentially implies time, it would not be easy to give a reason, why neuter verbs should not, as well as active, have participles both of present time, and of past. According to the common theory, *dormiens*, sleeping, is the present participle of a neuter verb: but where is the preterit participle? Of active verbs we have participles of either sort; *amans*, loving, *amatus*, loved; *audiens*, hearing, *auditus*, heard, &c. But of *dormio*, I sleep, *sedeo*, I sit, *floréo*, I flourish, though there are participles of present time (as they are called) *dormiens*, sleeping, *sedens*, sitting, *florens*, flourishing, there are none of past time. And yet, these attributes may be spoken of as past, as well as present. He slept, he sat, he flourished, may be said, as well as, he sleeps, he sits, he flourishes.

How is this difficulty to be solved? By rejecting the common theory, and adopting what is here offered. Call the one participle *Active*, and the other *Passive*: and then, what is more easy, than to say, that to Neuter verbs, which can never be Passive, no passive participle can ever belong?

Excepting, therefore, the Greek participles, which are more numerous, and perhaps less understood, than those of other

manner, how it comes to pass, that these tenses are so often used promiscuously by Latin writers. See *Rudiments of the Latin Tongue*, page 45.

tongues; may we not, from what has been said, infer, that Participles, *as expressing the attribute of the verb without affirmation*, ought to be distinguished, not into those of past, present, and future time, but into, 1. *Active and imperfect*, which signify action, or condition, begun, continuing, and unfinished, as *scribens*, writing, *dormiens*, sleeping: 2. *Passive and Perfect*, which denote action complete, as *scriptus*, written: and, 3. *Future*, expressive of action, or condition, which is to commence, but has not yet commenced, as *scripturus*, about to write, *dormiturus*, about to sleep, and (if you please) *scribendus*, about to be written.

If now it be asked, in what respects the adjective differs from the participle: I answer, first, that the former, though it may be derived from a verb, (as *tacitus*, silent, from *taceo*) is not, like the participle, necessarily derived from it: and, secondly, that those *varieties* of expression and form, which relate to the *continuance, completion, and futurity, of action and condition*, and which belong essentially to the participle, are not characteristic of the adjective. Other distinctions might be specified, but these are sufficient. — The Adjective denotes a quality simply: the Participle denotes a quality, together with several other considerations relating to the continuance, completion, and futurity, of action and condition.

These

These remarks were reserved to this place : because, without the knowledge of some things in the two last sections, they could not be understood. If, on account of the unavoidable repetition of certain technical terms, the reader should find them in any degree obscure, he needs not be discouraged ; as none of either the foregoing, or the subsequent, reasonings depend upon them.

S E C T. VI.

*The subject of Attributives continued.—
Of Adverbs.*

THE Greek word • *Epirrbéma*, which answers to *adverb*, properly signifies something *additional to an attributive*: for, as was already observed, all sorts of attributives, the adjective and participle as well as the verb, were called † *rbémata*, or verbs, by the antient grammarians. In this etymology of the name, we partly discern the nature of an Adverb. It is a word joined to attributives; and commonly denotes some circumstance, manner, or quality, connected with their signification.

Adverbs are joined—to verbs, as *fortiter pugnavit*, he fought *bravely*;—to participles, as *graviter sauciatus*, *grievously* wounded;—to adjectives, as *egregie fidelis*, *remarkably* faithful. They are joined even to nouns: but, when this happens, the noun will be found to imply the meaning of an attributive; as when Livy says, *admodum puella*, *very much* a girl, the sense plainly is, a girl *very young*. Adverbs are also joined to adverbs: for the circumstances, manners, or

• ἐπιρρημα.

† ρηματα.

qualities,

qualities, denoted by this part of speech, may themselves be characterised by other circumstances, manners, or qualities; as *multo minus audacter*, much less boldly; *sat cito si sat bene*, soon enough if well enough.

Some grammarians consider the adverb as a secondary attributive; or, as a word denoting the attribute of an attribute. Theodore Gaza says, that it is, as it were, the verb's epithet or adjective: and Priscian observes, that, when added to verbs, it has the same effect which an adjective has when joined to a noun. And that this is a true character of many adverbs, cannot be denied: for which reason I have referred this part of speech to the chapter of Attributives. A verb, adjective, or participle cannot be where a substantive is not, either expressed or understood: and an adverb is equally dependent on its *verb*. When I say, Cesar fought valiantly; the attribute *fought* is characterised by the adverb *valiantly*, as Cesar the person is by the verb *fought*. Agreeably to this notion of Adverbs, it would be easy to specify a great number of them, which limit, enlarge, or otherwise modify, the meaning of the verbs, participles, adjectives, and adverbs, to which they are joined: as, he walked *much*, he walked *little*, he walked *slowly*, *quickly*, *gracefully*, *awkwardly*, &c.;—he was wounded *slightly*, *grievously*, *mortally*, *incurably*, *dangerously*;—*more brave*, *less brave*, *prudently*

prudently brave, *ostentatiously* brave, &c. ;—bravely, *more* bravely, *most* bravely, *very* bravely, *much less* bravely, &c.

Many adverbs there are, however, which do not so properly mark the attributes of attributes, as some remoter circumstance attending an attribute or our way of conceiving it, and speaking of it. Such are the simple affirmative and negative *yes* and *no*.—Is he learned? No. Is he brave? Yes. Here the two adverbs signify, not any modification of the attributes *brave* and *learned*; but a total negation of the attribute, in the one case; and, in the other, a declaration that the attribute belongs to the person spoken of.—Such also are those adverbs, of which in every language there is a great number, that denote *time*, *place*, *certainty*, *contingency*, and the like: as, he is *here*, he will go *tomorrow*, he will *certainly* come, he will *probably* speak. For, when I say, “He goes *slowly*,” I express by the adverb a certain modification of going;—but when I say, “he will go the day after this day,” or, “he will go *tomorrow*,” I say nothing as to the *mode* of going, nor do I characterize the attribute *going* at all; I only say, that, at such a time, *going* will be the attribute, or the action, of such a person.

Adverbs are indeed applied to many purposes; and their general nature may be better understood by reading a list of them, than
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by any description or definition. Most of them seem to have been introduced into language, in order to express by one word the meaning of two or three: *in what place*, for example, by *where?*—*to what place*, by *whither?*—*in a direction ascending*, by *upward*;—*at the present time*, by *now*;—*at what time*, by *when?*—*at that time*, by *then*;—*many times*, by *often*;—*not many times*, by *seldom*;—*it is done as it should be*, by *well done*;—*it is done with wisdom*, by *wisely done*;—*it is certain that he will come*, by *he will certainly come*, &c. Even *yes* may be expressed by circumlocution, without an adverb; as, *Are you well? Yes*; that is, *I am well*. And, where the predicate of a negative proposition may be supplied by a word of contrary meaning, *No* or *Not* may be dispensed with, and the proposition becomes positive: *Are you sick? No*: that is, *I am well*;—*He is not present*, that is, *he is absent*.

In Hebrew, though there are several adverbs of negation, there is no affirmative adverb answering to *yes*. *Yea* occurs only once in the English Old Testament, namely, in the third chapter of Genesis, where it has a different meaning. The defect is always supplied by a periphrasis, in the way here hinted at: as, *Is he well? He is well*. The Latin seems originally to have been deficient in the same respect. *Ita, etiam, and maxime,*
are,

are, when used in this sense, elliptical circumlocutions.

Hence it appears, that adverbs, though of great use, because they promote brevity, and consequently energy, of expression, are not among the most essential parts of language; because their place might be supplied in almost all cases, by other parts of speech. However they are found in great abundance, in most languages: whence we may infer, that it is natural for men to have recourse to them on certain occasions.

Adverbs expressive of quality are in Greek, Latin, English, &c. almost innumerable. In Hebrew, they are not very many; but the want is easily supplied. The masculine of the adjective is often used adverbially; *tob* is *bonus* and also *bene*; *Rang* is both *malus* and *male*:—which is sometimes done in English; as when *right*, *wrong*, *ill*, *well*, &c. are used adverbially, as well as for adjectives. But this want the Hebrews more commonly supply by a preposition and a noun: for *truly*, they say *in truth*; for *righteously*, *in righteousness*. Even in adjectives they do not greatly abound. They say, *God of justice*, instead of *just God*; and *throne of glory*, instead of *glorious throne*. We often do the same: we may say indifferently, either a wise man, a wealthy man, a courageous man, &c.

&c. or a man of wisdom, of wealth, of courage, &c.

I said, that Adverbs promote energy of expression. But this happens only when they promote brevity too, and are sparingly used, and chosen with judgement. A superabundance of them, or of adjectives, makes a style unwieldy and tawdry. For it is from its nouns, rather than from its attributives, that language derives strength: even as a building derives stability rather from the walls and rafters, than from the plastering, wainscotting, and painting. Young writers, however, are apt to think otherwise; and, with a view to invigorate their expression, qualify every verb with an adverb, and every noun with an epithet. And so, their compositions resemble a house, whose walls are supported by posts and buttresses; which not only make it unseemly to the eye, and inconvenient by taking up too much room, but also justify a suspicion, of weakness in the work, and unskilfulness in the architect. Such a period as the following will explain what I mean. “ I am honestly, seriously, and unalterably of opinion, that nothing can possibly be more incurably and emphatically destructive, or more decisively fatal, to a kingdom, than the introduction of thoughtless dissipation, and the pomp of lazy luxury.” * Would not the

* *The pomp of lazy luxury*—a phrase of Lord Shaftesbury's.

full import of this noisy sentence be better expressed thus: "I am of opinion, that
 " nothing is more ruinous to a kingdom,
 " than luxury and dissipation?"—Now observe, that in the former there are eight adverbs and four adjectives, and in the latter one adjective, and one adverb. If two garments are sufficient for elegance and use, who would burden himself with twenty? But this by the by.

Some authors affirm, that adverbs may be found in all the ten *Categories*; and think, that the most effectual way of arranging them, is to refer them to the several categories to which they belong. The Categories, or, as they are called in Latin, the Predicaments, are ten general heads of division, to which Aristotle and his followers supposed, that every thing, or idea, conceivable by the human understanding, might be reduced. They are as follows. 1. Substance. 2. Quantity. 3. Quality. 4. Relation. 5. Action. 6. Passion. 7. Time. 8. Place. 9. Situation. 10. Habit; or, the being Habited*. This arrangement was long

* " Cornelius was forced to give Martin sensible
 " images. Thus calling up the coachman he asked him
 " what he had seen at the bear-garden. The man answered, he saw two men fight a prize; one was a fair
 " man, a sergeant of the guards; the other black, a
 " butcher: the sergeant had red breeches, the butcher
 " blue; they fought upon a stage about four o'clock,
 " and

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long considered as Perfect; but has fallen into disrepute, since the Peripatetick philosophy began to decline. It must be owned, however, that, if we arrange the Adverbs according to it, we shall have a pretty extensive idea of their nature, and of the various purposes to which they may be applied. But this has never been done, so far as I know, by any grammarian; and therefore I am apprehensive, that the following attempt may be found erroneous.

1. Under *Substance*, the first category, may be comprehended such adverbs as *Essentially, substantially, spiritually, corporeally, angelically, Socratically, &c.*

2. Under *Quantity*, the second, may be arranged those adverbs, that denote extension, or number. Of the former sort are, *much, greatly, exceedingly, enough, almost, scarcely*, and the like. Of the latter are, *once, twice, thrice, secondly, thirdly, fourthly, &c.*

3. *Quality*, the third category, is, according to Aristotle, of four species: compre-

" and the sergeant wounded the butcher in the leg.
 " Mark, quoth Cornelius, how the fellow runs through
 " the predicaments. Men, *substantia*; two, *quantitas*;
 " fair and black, *qualitas*; Sergeant of the guards and
 " Butcher, *Relatis*; wounded, *actis et passis*; fighting,
 " *fitis*; itage, *ubi*; four o'clock, *quando*; blue and red
 " breeches, *habitus*."—If the reader is unacquainted with
 the categories, this example will be a help to his memory.

hending, first, Intellectual habits, to which correspond such adverbs as *virtuously, vitiously, wisely, valiantly, foolishly, &c.*; secondly, Natural powers of the mind or body, to which may be referred *powerfully, sensibly, willingly, forcibly, feebly, &c.*; thirdly, Qualities perceived by sense, expressed, adverbially, by *softly, warmly, coldly, loudly, sweetly, clearly, &c.*; fourthly, Figures of things with or without life, to which class we may refer, *elegantly (shaped), circularly, triangularly, &c.*

4. The adverbs that signify *Relation* (the fourth predicament) are of various kinds. They express, first, Resemblance, as, *so, thus*; secondly, Contrariety, as, *otherwise, differently, contrariwise, &c.*; thirdly, Order, as, *afterwards, next, first, secondly, &c.*; fourthly, Coexistence, or Assemblage, as, *together, jointly, &c.*; fifthly, Separation, as, *separately, diversely, only, chiefly, especially, singularly, &c.*; sixthly, Cause and Effect, as, *therefore, consequently, &c.*

5. *Action* is the fifth category: and, as there are many sorts of it, so are there many classes of adverbs to express it. As, first, Bodily action, *swimmingly, snatchingly, cursim, carptim, &c.*; secondly, Mental action,—as desire, *utinam, O that*;—denying or forbidding, *no, not*;—assuring, *indeed, certainly, undoubtedly*;—granting, as *well* (be it so);—affirming, as *yes, truly*;—preferring,

as *rather, especially*;—doubting and conjecture, as *perhaps, possibly, probably*;—interrogation, in regard, first, to time, as *when?* secondly, to place, as *where?* thirdly, to quantity, as *quantum, quot, how much, how many?* fourthly, to quality, as *how, quomodo?* — Motion, as *swiftly, slowly, &c.*;—Rest, as *quietly, silently, still.*

6. Adverbs belonging to the sixth category, and expressive of *Passion*, are, *confusedly, distractedly, feelingly*, and the like.

7. Those that belong to the seventh, which is *Ubi*, or *Place*, are very numerous, and by Ruddiman are divided into five classes. They signify, first, in a place, as *where? here*: secondly, to a place, as *whither? thither*: thirdly, towards a place, as, *backward, forward, upward, downwards, &c.*: fourthly, from a place, as *whence? hence, thence*: fifthly, by or through a place, as (in Latin) *qua? hac, illac, alia*, which, however, are no adverbs, but pronouns of the ablative case, to which *via* is understood.

8. The eighth predicament, *when? or time*, may be supposed to comprehend all the adverbs of time; which are also very numerous, and may be divided into, first, those of time present, as *now, today*: secondly, those of time past, as, *then, yesterday, lately*: thirdly, those of time future, as, *presently, immediately, tomorrow, not yet*: fourthly,

those of time indefinite, as *when, sometimes, always, never*: fifthly, those of continued time, as, *long, how long, long ago*: sixthly, those of repeated time, as, *often, seldom, again, now and then, &c.*

9. *Situation, or Position*, the ninth predicament, has not many adverbs belonging to it. *Supinely*, however, is one: and, *obliquely, pronely* (if there be such a word) *sideways, &c.* may be others.

10. The tenth, *Habitus*, denotes something additional and exterior to a substance, but not a part of it; as a diadem, a coat, a gown, &c. There are not in any of the languages I know (so far as I remember) adverbs of this signification; such ideas being most commonly expressed by nouns, as, he wore a cloak, his head was encircled with a diadem. Yet I do not deny the reality of such adverbs; and it is possible I may have met with them, though they do not now occur. If the English idiom would allow the word *succinctly* to have its original meaning, it might perhaps be an adverb of the tenth category; as in this example, He was drest *succinctly*, that is, in garments tucked up:—but this is not English; nor is *succincte* in Latin ever used in any other sense, than that of *briefly, or compendiously*.—By the by, I cannot see, for what purpose Aristotle made a separate category of the tenth; for to me it seems included in some of

of the preceding. A *crown* is as really a *substance*, as the head that wears it, and may last a thousand years longer *. Or, if it is *the having* of the crown, or *the being crowned*, that distinguishes the category, as when we say, *a crowned head*, then *crowned* denotes a quality perceived by sense, and so belongs to the third predicament. Indeed this is not the only objection that might be made to the doctrine of the categories. Whoever treats of it in the way of detail, and without prejudice, will find, if I mistake not, that in some things it is redundant, and in others defective. Wishing, however, to give in this place some account of that celebrated division; as it was for many ages believed to be the foundation of all human science; I chose to arrange the adverbs by categories, rather than according to that simpler (though not less comprehensive) scheme, which is given by the learned and accurate Ruddiman in his *Rudiments of the Latin tongue*.

Since this was written, *PHILOSOPHICAL ARRANGEMENTS* have been published; a work of uncommon erudition; in which the doctrine of the Categories is unfolded at large, with great precision of language, and

* “The greatest difficulty was, when they came to the tenth predicament. Crambe affirmed, that his *habitus* was more a *substance* than he was; for his cloaths could better subsist without him, than he without his cloaths.” *Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus*.
Ridentem dicere verum quid vetat?

in a style as entertaining, as can well be applied to arguments so abstracted, and of so little use. I say, Of so little use: for after all that the ingenious and elegant author has advanced, I am sorry to be obliged to declare, that in this doctrine I see little more, than an elaborate solution of trifling difficulties made on purpose to be solved: as conjurors are said to have raised ghosts, and other shadowy bugbears, merely to show their address in laying them. It may have been a convenient introduction to the verbal part of the Greek philosophy, and to the art of sophistical declamation: but of its tendency to regulate the understanding, to illustrate moral truth, or to promote the improvement of art, or the right interpretation of nature, I am not sensible at all. This is said, not with any view to detract from others; but only to account for my own conduct, in dismissing, after so slight an examination, that celebrated part of antient literature.

As to the formation and derivation of adverbs, it depends so much on the idiom of particular languages, that one cannot enter upon it, without going beyond the bounds of Universal Grammar.

C H A P. III.

OF INTERJECTIONS.

THE Interjection is a part of speech in all the languages known to Europeans. Whether it be in all others, is not certain. For, though it have its use, and may often promote pathos or energy, we cannot say, that it is so necessary, as the noun, the pronoun, or the attributive. Its place might indeed be supplied, in most cases, by other words, if the customs of society would permit. I am sorry, conveys the same meaning with *alas!* though perhaps not so emphatically: but the defect of emphasis may be owing to nothing more than this, that the one expression is less common than the other on certain occasions. In like manner, without being misunderstood, we might say, instead of *fye!* I dislike it, or, I abhor it; and, instead of *strange!* (*papa!*), I am surprised, or, I am astonished, might be used with no bad effect.

The name *Interjection* expresses very well the nature of this part of speech. It is a word *thrown into* discourse (*interjectum*) in order to intimate or express some emotion of the mind: as, I am, *alas!* a miserable sinner:

finner : *fyee, fyee!* let it not be heard of : *well done!* (*euge!*) thou hast proved thyself a man. It is, indeed, as Ruddiman observes, a compendious way of conveying a sentence in a word, that the shortness of the phrase may suit the suddenness of the emotion or passion expressed by it.

For Interjections are not so much the signs of thought, as of feeling. And that a creature, so inured to articulate sound as man is, should acquire the habit of uttering, without reflection, certain vocal sounds, when he is assaulted by any strong passion, or becomes conscious of any intense feeling, is natural enough. Indeed, by continual practice, this habit becomes so powerful, that in some cases we should find it difficult to resist it, even if we wished to do so. When attacked by acute pain, it is hardly possible for us not to say *ah!* or *alas!*—and, when we are astonished at any narrative or event, the words, *strange!* *prodigious!* *indeed!* break from us, without any effort of the will.

In the Greek Grammar, Interjections are referred to the class of adverbs; but, I think, improperly. They are not adverbs in any sense of the word. They express not the attributes of attributes; nor are they joined to verbs, to participles, or to adjectives, as adverbs are; nor do they limit or modify the signification of attributives in any respect
what.

whatever. The Latin grammarians have, therefore, done better, in separating the interjection from other parts of speech, and giving it a particular name. And in this they are followed by all who have written grammars of the modern tongues.

It has been said, that interjections are the remains of those barbarous cries, by which (according to the Epicurean system) the first men expressed their feelings, before the invention of the art of speech. But I deny, that Speech is an art, in this sense of the word. I cannot conceive, how a set of mute, savage, and beastly creatures should on a sudden commence philosophers, and form themselves into an academy, or meet together in a large cave, in order to contrive a system of words, which, without being able to speak themselves, they afterwards taught their dumb and barbarous brethren to articulate. Orpheus, performing at a publick concert, for the entertainment of lions, tygers, and other wild beasts of quality; or Amphion making the stones and trees dance to the sound of his harp, till, after many awkward bounces and caperings, they at last took their seats, in the form of towns and castles, are in my judgment as reasonable suppositions. It admits of proof, from the nature of the thing, as well as from history, that men in all ages must have been speaking animals; that
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the young learned the art by imitating their elders ; and that our first parents must have spoken by immediate inspiration. *

Some grammarians maintain, that the interjection is no part of speech at all, but a mode of utterance common to all nations, and universally understood :—in other words, that *fye, alas, buzza, euge, apage, eb, bien, abilaffo*, &c. are as common, and as intelligible, over the whole earth, * as a displeased, a sorrowful, a joyful, or an angry countenance. It is strange, those authors did not recollect, that, if we except *O ! Ah !* and one or two more, the interjections of different languages are as different as their nouns or verbs : *ai* in Greek being expressed by *eheu* in Latin, and in English by *alas !*—and *woes me !* being in Latin *bei mibi*, and in Greek *oimoi*. Some interjections indeed may be borrowed by one nation from the language of another ; thus *apage* and *euge* are the same in Latin and in Greek. But some nouns and verbs are, in like manner, borrowed by one nation from another ; yet we do not suppose, that such words, because current in Greece, Italy, and England, are universally intelligible, or form any part of that language, which, in contradistinction to *artificial*, I have formerly described under the name of *natural*. †

* See Part i. chap. 6.

† Part i. chap. 1.

Interjections, though frequent in discourse, occur not often in elegant composition. Unpractised writers, however, are apt to exceed in the use of them, in order, as they imagine, to give pathos to their style: which is just as if, in order to render conversation witty or humourous, one were to interrupt it with frequent peals of laughter. The appearance of violent emotion in others does not always raise violent emotion in us: our hearts, for the most part, are more effectually subdued by a sedate and simple utterance, than by interjections and theatrical gesture. At any rate, composure is more graceful than extravagance; and therefore, a multitude of these passionate particles, will generally, at least on common occasions, favour more of levity than of dignity; of want of thought, than of keen sensation. In common discourse this holds, as well as in writing. They who wish to speak often, and have little to say, abound in interjections, *wonderful, amazing, prodigious, fye fye, O dear, Dear me, bum, bab, indeed, Good life, Good Lord, and the like*: and hence, the too frequent use of such words tends to breed a suspicion, that one labours under a scantiness of ideas.—In poetry, certain superfluities of language are more allowable than in prose; yet some elegant English poets are at pains to avoid interjections. Tragick writers are often intemperate in the use of them. We meet with entire lines of

interjections in the Greek plays. But it is yet more provoking to see an English tragedian endeavour to work upon the human heart by such profane expletives, as Flames and furies! Damnation! Heaven and earth! not to mention others of still greater solemnity. If the poet has no other way to make up his verse, or to show that his hero is in earnest, I would recommend to him the more harmless phrasology of Fielding's *Tom Thumb*,

Confusion! horror! murder! guts! and death!

Interjections denoting imprecation, and those in which the Divine Name is irreverently mentioned, are always offensive to a pious mind: and the writer or speaker, who contracts a habit of introducing them, may without breach of charity be suspected of profaneness. To say, with a devout mind, / God bless me, can never be improper: but to make those solemn words a familiar interjection expressive of surprise or peevishness, is, to say the least of it, very indecent.

As to common oaths and curses, I need not say any thing to convince my reader, that they are utterly unlawful, and a proof that the speaker has at one time or other kept bad company. For to the honour of the age let it be mentioned, that profane swearing

swearing is now more generally exploded in polite society, than it used to be in former times. In this respect, as in many others, the wits of Charles the second's reign were most infamous. Queen Elizabeth was addicted to swearing: and most of our old kings and barons are said to have distinguished themselves by the use of some one particular oath, which was in their mouths continually. There is a great deal of this ribaldry in the poems of Chaucer.

In the antient Grammars we have adverbs of swearing, and interjections of imprecation: nay, I think I have been told formerly, that in Latin, and in Greek too perhaps, there are oaths for men, and oaths for women; and that if either sex invade the privilege of the other in this matter, it is a violation of the laws of swearing, and of grammar. Swearing seems to have been more frequent in the Grecian dialogue, than in the Roman. Almost every affirmation in Plato may be said to be deposed upon oath.

One interjection, we are told, expresses laughter. But it is rather a mark in discourse, to denote, that the speaker is supposed to laugh in that place. For if, instead of the inarticulate convulsion which we call laughter, one were to pronounce those three articulate syllables, *ba ba be*, the effect would
be

be ridiculous. Laughter is no part of speech, but a natural agitation, common to all mankind, and universally understood.

It is needless to subjoin a list of Interjections, as they are but few, and may be seen in any common grammar.

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C H A P. IV.

Of Connectives and Articles.

EVERY individual word, which is comprehended under the several species hitherto mentioned, conveys some idea to the mind, even when pronounced separate. Thus *love*, the noun, *lovely*, the adjective, *lovest*, the verb, *loving*, the participle, *lovingly*, the adverb; thus the pronouns *I*, *thou*, *he*, *that*, *this*, *she*, *they*, &c.; and thus the interjections, *alas*, *sie*, *strange*!—have, each of them, some meaning.

But some sorts of words there are, which, like ciphers in arithmetick, have no signification when separate, though when joined to other words they are very significant. Thus, *from*, *in*, *and*, *with*, *the*, convey no idea. But when I say, “He came *from* London, “*in* the chariot, *with* a friend *and* servant,” the sense is compleat; and is made so by these little words; which are now so important, that, if we leave them out, and say, “He “came London the chariot a friend servant,” we speak nonsense.

It may be observed, that there are in this sentence two other little words, that of themselves mean nothing, *a* and *the*, but which, when connected as above, are found to be

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useful,

useful, though not absolutely *necessary*. For, if we say, "He came from London in chariot with friend and servant," there is a meaning; which, though awkwardly expressed, according to the idiom of our tongue, may however be guessed at; and which, rendered literally into Latin, *Venit Londino in curru cum amico et servo*, is neither awkward nor ungrammatical.

Those words, therefore, which become significant by being connected with other words, may be divided into two classes; the *Necessary* and the *Useful*. The former we call *Connectives*; the latter *Articles*. Of which in their order.

S E C T. I.

OF CONNECTIVES.

EVERY thing that is a Connective in language must connect either words or sentences, that is, either ideas or affirmations. When I say, "He came from home," the word *from* connects two words, *came* and *home*: when I say, "He came from home, and he comforted me," the word *and* connects two sentences; the first, "He came from home;" the second, "He comforted me." The former sort of Connectives are termed *Prepositions*; the latter, *Conjunctions*.

§ 1. Of *Prepositions*: with Remarks on the Cases.

The term *Preposition* signifies placing *before*: and it is true of almost all the words of this class, that they are, or may be, *put before* the word which they connect with something previous: as, "The enemy armed *with* darts, and mounted *on* horses, fled *from* us, *in* confusion, *over* the plain, *towards* the river, *at* the foot of the mountains, *beyond* which they could not pass."

A *Preposition* may be defined; "A part of speech, not significant of itself, but of
Y 2 " such

“ such efficacy, as to unite two significant
 “ words, which, according to the nature of
 “ things, or the rules of the language, could
 “ not otherwise be united.” The former
 part of this definition must be plain enough
 already: the latter may need illustration.
 Let us inquire then, what is meant by say-
 ing, “ that some words, from the nature of
 “ things, and others, by the rule of the lan-
 “ guage, can be united in no other way,
 “ than by prepositions.”

First, when things are intimately connected
 in nature, one would think, that the words
 which stand for them might easily coalesce
 in language, without the aid of connectives.
 And so in fact they often do. No two things
 can be more closely united, than a substance
 and its quality; a man, for example, and
 his character. These therefore of themselves
 coalesce in all the known languages: and we
 say, a *good man*, a *tall man*; *vir bonus*, *vir*
procerus. Here prepositions are quite un-
 necessary.—Further, there is a connection
 equally intimate between the agent and the
 action; for the action is really an attribute
 of the agent: and therefore we say, the *boy*
reads, the *man walks*; the noun coalescing
 with the verb so naturally, that no other
 word is requisite to unite them.—Moreover,
 an action, and that which is acted upon by
 it, being contiguous in nature, and mutually
 affecting each other, their names would seem
 to

to be mutually attractive in language, and capable of coalescing without external aid ; as, he *reads a book*, he *beats his breast*, he *builds an house*, he *breaks a stone*.—Further still ; an attributive is naturally and intimately connected with the adverb which illustrates or modifies its signification : and therefore, when we say, he *walks slowly*, he is *very learned*, he is *prudently brave*, it is plain that no preposition can be necessary to promote the coalescence.—These few examples may suffice to show, that, from the very nature of things, some words may be, and are connected, without the aid of prepositions.

But, secondly, it is no less natural, that, to mark the connection of some other words, prepositions should be necessary. If we say, “ the rain falls heaven ;—the enemy ran the
“ river ;—Creusa walked Eneas ;—the tower
“ fell the Greeks ;—she led him the house ;
“ —Lambeth is Westminster-abbey ;”—there is observable in each of these expressions, either a total want of connection, or such a connection as produces falsehood or nonsense : and it is evident, that, before they can be turned into sense, the gap must be filled up by some connecting word ; as thus,
“ the rain falls *from* heaven ;—the enemy
“ ran *towards* the river ;—Creusa walked *beside*
“ *hind* Eneas ;—the tower fell *upon* the
“ Greeks ;—she led him *into* the house ;—
“ Lambeth is *over against* Westminster-ab-
“ bey.”

“bey.”—We see then, how prepositions may be necessary to connect those words, that in their signification are not naturally connected.

Thirdly; It was hinted, that, by the rule of certain languages, some words, though coalescing in sense, cannot be connected in discourse, without prepositions. When this happens, it is owing to some peculiar defect, or to some other peculiarity, in those languages. For example: the instrument where-with one performs an action must have a natural connection with that action; so natural indeed, and so intimate, that they cannot be separated. The words, therefore, which stand for them, may, in languages that decline their nouns by cases, be united without a preposition: as *Scribit calamo*. But, if a language has no cases, or very few, it may so happen, that merely by subjoining the name of the instrument to the active verb we shall *not* be able to mark the connection. Thus, in English, “he writes a pen,” having no definite sense, cannot mark connection, or any thing else. Here then, in our tongue, a preposition comes to be necessary to ascertain a particular union of words, which, according to the English idiom, cannot be so conveniently united in any other way; and so we say, “he writes *with* a pen.” I say,—“which cannot be *so* conveniently united:” for that without

without a preposition the same sense *may* be expressed, admits of no doubt; as, "he writes, and a pen is the instrument." What then is the advantage of using prepositions in a case of this kind? The advantage is considerable: for by this simple expedient we signify in few words what would otherwise require many.—Again, in the Latin idiom, *Arguitur furti* has a definite meaning; the first word denoting accusation, and the second a crime; and the connection between them being marked by the case of the noun. But in English, "He is accused theft," has no clear meaning; because there is nothing to show, how the words are connected, or whether they be connected or not. But, by means of a preposition (which supplies the want of a case) "He is accused *of* theft," we unite them together, and remove all doubt in regard to their signification.

The Latin Grammarians reckon up twenty-eight prepositions governing the accusative case; fifteen that take the ablative; and four, that have sometimes the one case, and sometimes the other:—in all forty-seven. But several of these are superfluous; some rarely occur; and a few are by the best Grammarians accounted adverbs rather than prepositions. Hence we may infer, that many prepositions are not necessary in language. Those in our tongue hardly exceed thirty.

But it is to be observed, that almost every preposition we are acquainted with has more than one signification, and that some of them have several. The English *of*, for example, denotes *concerning*, as, A Treatise *of* human nature; denotes the matter of which a thing is made, as, a cup *of* silver; denotes the means, as, to die *of* hunger; denotes *among*, as, *Of* three horses two were lame; denotes *through*, or, in consequence of, as, It is *of* the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed; denotes *from*, as, London is south *of* York; denotes *out of*, as, *Of* this little he had some to spare; denotes *extraction*, as, Alexander the son *of* Philip; denotes *belonging to*, as, He is *of* the tribe of Judah; denotes *containing*, or *filled with*, as, a glass *of* wine, an hogshhead *of* ale;—and has several other significations. In like manner, we might specify thirty senses of the preposition *for*; about twenty of *from*, and the same number nearly of *with*, *by*, and some others; for which I refer to Johnson's Dictionary. These varieties of meaning give trouble to those who are acquiring a language; but are attended with no inconvenience, when one is master of it. So that we may repeat, that a small number of prepositions are sufficient for the ordinary purposes of life. In Greek, which is said to be more perfect than any other tongue, there are only eighteen: most of which, however, vary exceedingly in their signi-

signification, according to the cases that they govern, and according as they are used in a proper, or in a figurative, sense.

For I speak here of the *separable* prepositions, which are distinct and complete words. Those that are called *Inseparable*, are not to be considered in Universal Grammar; being neither connectives, nor words, but only syllables, which generally add something to the signification of those words wherewith they are compounded, but never stand by themselves: as (in English) *a, be, con, mis, de, dis, &c.* in the words, *abide, bedeck, conjoin, mistake, decipher, displease, &c.*

Prepositions, in their original and literal acceptation, seem all to have denoted Relations of place. This at least is true (if I mistake not) of all the Latin and Greek prepositions without exception, as well as of all the English. *Till*, indeed, or *until*, is now used of time only, as in this phrase, "I never heard of him till this moment:" but antiently it had, and among the vulgar in Scotland it still has, a more general sense, being of the same import nearly with *to* or *towards*; as in this line of Spenser,

He roused himself full blithe, and hasten'd them
until.

Priscian thinks, that the Latin *clam* is not, as it is commonly said to be, a preposition, but rather an adverb; and assigns this reason
among

among others, that it never has any reference to *place* in its signification.

The importance of prepositions, in marking, with equal brevity and accuracy, *relations in place*, will partly appear from the following sentences. "He went *to* a city,
 " *at* the foot *of* the hill, *over against* a lake,
 " that stretches *before* a wide common. On
 " this side *of* the city, the road winds *about*
 " some great rocks, that rise fifty feet *above*
 " the level of the plain, then goes straight
 " *towards* the west, *among* bushes, *between*
 " two little hills. When he came *within*
 " the walls, and had got *nigh* to the mar-
 " ket-place, *beneath* the citadel, the enemy
 " fled *from* him, *through* the streets, *out of*
 " the city, and *along* the banks of the lake,
 " *without* their baggage, till they escaped
 " *in* boats *beyond* the river. He followed
 " *after*, and was not far *behind*, them; hav-
 " ing *with* him some friends, whom he had
 " brought *from* home," &c.

But, in all languages, Prepositions are used figuratively, to signify other relations, besides those of place. For example, as they who are *above* have in several respects the advantage of such as are *below*, prepositions expressing high and low place are used for superiority and inferiority in general: as,
 " he is *above* all disguise;—he serves *under*
 " such a captain;—he rules *over* the peo-
 " ple;—he will do nothing *beneath* his high
 " station."

“ station.”—— *Beyond* implies, not only distance of place, but also, that between us and the distant object something intervenes, which is also at some distance ; as, “ he is “ beyond sea.” But persons, or things, so situated with respect to us, cannot be immediately in our power : and hence, *beyond* is used figuratively, and in general, to signify, *out of the reach, or out of the power of* : as “ Goodness beyond thought,—Glorious beyond compare,—Gratitude beyond expression.”—Take another example. *By* denotes *nearness* ; and *with*, *sameness*, of place : as “ She was with him ;—I found him close “ with Swift ;—his dwelling is by the sea ; “ —By the rivers of Babylon we sat and “ wept.” Now they who are *with* us, or who are *by* us, that is, who are in our company, or who are near at hand, may co-operate with and assist us ; but the former with a more immediate agency, and closer connection, than the latter. Hence that figurative use of the prepositions *by* and *with*, which is observable in sentences like the following : He walks *with* a staff, *by* moonlight ; He was taken *by* stratagem ; and killed *with* a sword.—Put the one preposition for the other ; and say, He walks *by* a staff *with* moonlight ; He was taken *with* stratagem, and killed *by* a sword ; and it will appear, that they differ in signification more than one at first view would be apt to imagine.

Hitherto

Hitherto I have considered prepositions as separate words. But they are often prefixed to, so as to form a part of, other words; as *overvalue*, *undergo*, &c. in which case, they generally impart something of their own meaning to the word with which they are compounded. And that this imparted meaning has in many cases an allusion to place, is well illustrated by Mr. Harris, in the following manner. “ Suppose a given space. “ *E* and *ex* signify *out of* that space; *per*, “ *through* it, from beginning to end; *in*, “ *within* it, so as not to reach the boundary; *sub*, *under* it. Hence, *E* and *Per* “ in composition augment. *Enormis* is “ something not simply big, but big in excess, something got out of the rule, and “ beyond the boundary: *Dico*, I speak, “ *Edico*, I speak out; whence *edictum*, an “ edict, something so effectually spoken, “ as that all are supposed to hear and to “ obey it: *Fari*, to speak, *Effari*, to speak “ out; whence *effatum*, an axiom, or self-evident proposition, addressed as it were “ to all men, and calling for universal assent: *Per magnus*, *perutilis*, great throughout, useful in every part.—On the contrary, *In* and *sub* diminish and lessen. “ *Injustus*, *iniquus*, unjust, unequitable; “ that *lies within* justice and equity, that “ reaches not so far, that falls short of them. “ *Subniger*, blackish, *subrubicundus*, reddish, “ tending

“ tending to black, and tending to red, but
 “ *under* the standard, and *below* perfection.”

So far Mr. Harris. I shall only add, that it is not easy to account for some coalitions of this nature; as, for example, the English compounds *understand* and *understanding*. It may, however, be offered, in the way of conjecture; that, as he who *stands under* a thing perceives its foundation, and how it is supported, and whether it be well supported; so he may be said to understand a doctrine, who comprehends the grounds or evidences of it *. Many such words there are in every language, to exercise the wit of the fanciful etymologist.

Words compounded with prepositions are very numerous in most tongues, but especially in Greek. There we find prefixed to a word, not only one preposition, but frequently two, and sometimes even three. Thus † *bupekproluein* is compounded of three prepositions (answering to *under*, *from*, and *forward*) and a verb signifying *to loose*; and this word is used by Homer to denote the *unyoking* of mules, by drawing them *forward, from under* the chariot. Other languages may express the same ideas by means of three or four words; but none, I be-

* Mr. Harris gives another etymology. See *Hermes*, page 371.

† *βυπεκπρολυνειν*. *Odyss.* vi, 88. See also *Odyss.* vi, 87.

lieve,

lieve, but the Greek, could express them all in one. *

Some English prepositions change the meaning of verbs, by being put after them. Thus, to cast, is to throw, but, to *cast up*, is to compute, or calculate: to give, is to bestow, but, to *give over*, is to cease, to abandon, to conclude to be lost: to knock, is to beat, but to *knock under* is a vulgar idiom denoting submission. So, to *take after*, to learn of, to resemble; to *take off*, to copy, or mimick; to *take on*, to be much affected; to *take up*, to reform; to *take up with*, to be contented with; and innumerable others.

A preposition often loses its connecting power, and becomes an adverb. Thus *round* is a preposition, when one says, He went round the walls; and an adverb when it is said, I turned round, to see who called me. The same thing happens in other languages. There are two or three Latin words, of which it is doubted by the best Grammarians, whether they be adverbs or prepositions. But it is not every preposition that admits of such a change. *Of*, *with*, *from*, and some others, are never adverbial.

* So λαμβανειν to take; καταλαμβανειν to take hold of; προκαταλαμβανειν to take hold of before another, to preoccupy; αντιπροκαταλαμβανειν, to preoccupy in opposition to another.

It may seem strange, that, in the course of this long inquiry concerning the essentials of language, so little should have been said on the subject of CASES. The reason is, that Cases are not essential to language. They are indeed of great importance in Greek and Latin: but a language may be significant enough without them, or at least with very few. We have no Cases in English, except the addition of *S* in the genitive, as, "the Lords day;" and in the pronouns, *I, we, thou, ye, he, they, she, it*, which in the oblique case become *me, us, thee, you, him, her, them*. And of our genitive in *S* it may be observed, first, that it is less in use now than formerly; and secondly, that it has sometimes a meaning different from that of the other genitive formed by the preposition *of*, as in the above example; for, *the Lords day*, and *the day of the Lord*, are not synonymous; the former signifying *Sunday*, the latter, *the day of judgment*, or, a day in which God will manifest himself in an extraordinary manner. This however may be owing to the repetition of the definite article, which in the latter phrase points out one particular day (or time) different from all others.

Those varieties of signification, which in the Greek and Latin nouns are marked by cases, are in English and the other modern languages of Europe marked, for the most part,

part, by prepositions, such as *of*, *to*, *for*, *by*, *with*, and *from*. Our nominative and accusative, indeed, are known by their position, the first being put before the verb, and the last after: at least this is the general rule; from which, however, writers, especially poets, often deviate, (as already observed) when that can be done without perplexing the sense.

In Hebrew, the case of the noun is marked by a change made, not in the end, but in the beginning of the word; and this change is plainly a preposition prefixed, but contracted in pronunciation. Thus *melech* is a king; *lemelech*, to a king; *mimelech*, from a king: *el* being the preposition that corresponds to the English *to*; and *min* being synonymous with *from*.

In the Erse or Gaelick, the oblique case, corresponding to the Latin genitive, is characterised by a change in the vowel or diphthong of the last syllable; as *Ossian*, *Ossian*; *Ossian*, of *Ossian*: *Sagard*, a priest; *Sagaird*, of a priest:—the accusative being the same with the nominative; and the dative and ablative distinguished (like our dative and ablative) by prepositions.

There is some inaccuracy in the doctrine of Cases, as commonly received among Grammarians; so that it is not easy, nor perhaps possible, to express the meaning of the word

case

case in a definition. For, what is it, that constitutes a case? Is it a peculiar termination, or inflexion of the noun? Then, first, in the plural of Latin nouns, there can be no more than four cases, because there are no more than four terminations; the dative being uniformly the same with the ablative, and the nominative with the vocative. And then, secondly, it cannot be said, that there are, in any one of the declensions, so many as six cases of the singular: for, in the first, the genitive and dative agree in termination; in the second, the dative and ablative; in the third, the nominative and vocative; in the fourth, the nominative, vocative, and genitive; and in the fifth, both the nominative and vocative, and the genitive and dative.

In fixing the number of their cases, the Latin grammarians seem to have been determined by three considerations: first, by the termination or inflection; secondly, by the meaning, or the relation subsisting between the noun and the word that governs it; and thirdly, by a regard to uniformity, or a desire of giving the same number of cases to the singular and to the plural, and of allowing as many to one declension, as to another. And I am inclined to think, that, by this method, though not strictly philosophical, both their declensions and their syntax are rendered more intelligible, than they would have been upon any other plan.

If we admit the termination to be the sole characteristick of a Case, then there are in English no more cases, than the few above specified. If cases are to be distinguished by the different significations of the noun, or by the different relations which it may bear to the governing word, then we have in our language as many cases almost, as there are prepositions: and, above a man, beneath a man, beyond a man, round about a man, within a man, without a man, &c. shall be cases, as well as, of a man, to a man, and with a man. In fact, it can hardly be said, that there are Cases, in any sense of the word, except in those nouns that vary their terminations: and therefore, we may repeat, that there are no cases in English, or very few; and that, consequently, Cases are not essential to language. For that, though the few we have were struck out of the English tongue, it would still be intelligible, though not so elegant, is a point, which can hardly admit of dispute. In some parts of England, *she* is used for *her*, and *we* for *us*, without inconvenience; the genitive in *S* is less frequent than that other genitive which is formed by the preposition *of*, and both are equally perspicuous; and, *of I, to I, of thou, with thou, I saw he, I saw they*, if they were as common, would certainly be as well understood, as *of me, to me, of thee, with thee, I saw him, I saw them*.

The

The origin of the word *Cafe*, and of some other grammatical terms relating to nouns, is very oddly explained by some authors; but has plausibility enough to deserve notice. They tell us, that, among the most antient Greek Grammarians, a line falling perpendicularly was the symbol of the nominative case; and that lines falling, not perpendicularly, but with different degrees of obliquity, were considered as the symbols of the other cases. Hence the first obtained the name of *Casus rectus*, or *the erect case*; and the others were called *Casus obliqui*, *the oblique cases*: hence they were all denominated *Casus*, or *Fallings*: and hence, an enumeration of the several cases or fallings of the noun is known by the name of a *Declension*; because it exhibits a sort of declining progress, from the noun's perpendicular form, through its several symbolical obliquities.

If it were asked, Whether a language with cases, like the Greek and the Latin, or one, which, like the English, *declines* its nouns by prepositions, deserve the preference; I should answer; first, that in point of perspicuity neither has any advantage over the other; *Regis, regi, rege*, of a king, to a king, with a king, being all equally intelligible:—and secondly, that the modern has more simplicity than the antient; because he who can decline one English noun may, if he know the singular and plural terminations,

tions, decline any other; which is by no means the case in the Latin and Greek.

But, thirdly, it must be allowed, that the Claslick tongues derive from the inflection of their nouns a very great superiority, in respect of elegance. For, first, what they express by one word *pennæ* (for example) we cannot express by fewer than two, or perhaps three, *of pen, of a pen, of the pen*. Besides, the varieties of termination in the Greek and Latin nouns contributes not a little to their harmony: while the unvaried sound of our substantives, with the perpetual repetition of such little words as *of, to, for, with, &c.* give a harshness to the language, which would certainly be offensive to an ear, that had long been inured to the modulation of the antient tongues.

But the chief advantage of diversified termination, both in nouns and in verbs, consists (as formerly hinted) in this, that it leaves the composer at liberty to place his words in any order, which he may think will most effectually promote variety, and energy, as well as harmony, of stile. Whereas, in the modern tongues, the relation that one word bears to another being in a great measure determined by their position, we are often confined to one particular arrangement; and, when we depart from that, and attempt those deviations from the grammatical

tical order which are so graceful in antient authors, are apt to write obscurely and affectedly.—In this respect, however, the English tongue is more susceptible of variety than the French, and English verse than English prose. Indeed, almost all arrangements of words, that do not perplex the sense, are permitted in our poetry, especially in our blank verse: a privilege, whereof Milton availing himself in its full latitude, displays in the *Paradise Lost* a variety and elegance of composition, which had never been equalled in any other modern tongue, and may bear to be compared with the most elaborate performances of antiquity.

Our want of inflection in our nouns, adjectives, and participles, makes us, in our written language, more dependent upon punctuation, than the antients were. Indeed, of punctuation, as we understand it, they had no idea: and it does not appear, that they suffered any inconvenience from the want of it. Whereas, in modern language, the misplacing or omission of a point will often alter the sense: and, if we had no points, we should find it difficult to write so as to be understood; to write elegantly, and yet intelligibly, would in that case be impossible. There is a passage in Cato; which, from being generally, if not always, mispointed, is, I think, generally misunderstood:

The ways of heaven are dark and intricate,
 Puzzled in mazes, and perplex'd with errors :
 Our understanding traces them in vain,
 Lost and bewilder'd in the fruitless search ; &c.

Thus the lines are printed in all the editions I have seen. And yet, it can hardly be supposed, that Addison's piety would have permitted him to say, or to make Cato say, that " the ways of heaven are perplexed with errors ;" or that his taste would have warranted such an expression as, " the ways of heaven are puzzled." I therefore presume, that the first line is a sentence by itself, and ought to end in a point or colon ; and that the sequel, ranged in the grammatical order, amounts to this ; " Our understanding, puzzled in mazes, and perplexed with errors, traces the ways of heaven in vain : " which is both elegant and true. Now this ambiguity could not have taken place in Latin or Greek, nor indeed in French or Italian, even though there had not been one point in the sentence : because the participles *puzzled* and *perplexed* would have been made to agree with the singular noun *understanding* ; in which case they could not also agree with the plural noun *ways*.

In explaining the several cases, and showing, why there are neither more nor fewer, and why so many, and what is the nature of each, some authors have been more particular,

ticular, and displayed greater subtlety, than in my opinion was requisite. As to the number of cases, grammarians have always differed in their sentiments, and are not reconciled to this day. Many explode the ablative, because the Greeks could do without it; and some will not allow the vocative to be a case, because it is often, both in Latin and in Greek, the same with the nominative. Aristotle and the Peripateticks maintained, that the nominative is not a case; and the Stoicks were equally positive, that it is. In the Armenian language, the number of cases is said to be ten: and I should not wonder, if a grammarian, much given to novelty and paradox, were to affirm, that there are in English as many cases almost as there are prepositions. While opinions are so different in regard to the precise number, it is vain to inquire, why there are neither more nor fewer, and why so many.

The nature of each particular case may be better understood by examples, than by logical definition. Indeed, all the definitions I have seen of the several cases are liable to objection; except, perhaps, that of the nominative, which is given by Mr. Harris, who calls it, "That case, without which there is no regular and perfect sentence."

"The Accusative," says the same author, "is that case, which to an efficient nominative, and a verb of action, subjoins,
Z 4 " either

“ either the effect, or the passive subject :”—the effect, as when I say, *Lyfippus fecit statuas*, Lyfippus made statues; the subject, as in this example, *Achilles vulneravit Hectora*, Achilles wounded Hector.—But this, though frequently, is not universally true. When it is said, *Antonius læsit Cicronem*, the first word is an efficient nominative, the second an active verb, and the third an accusative, according to the definition: but when I say, *Antonius nocuit Cicroni*, the efficient nominative and active verb are followed, not by an accusative, but by a dative. And there are other verbs of active signification, as *Potior*, for example, which take after them, rarely an accusative, sometimes a genitive, and frequently an ablative. And what shall we say of accusatives governed by prepositions; as *habitat juxta montem*, he dwells near the mountain? For neither is *habitat*, *he dwells*, an active verb; nor is the mountain, in any sense of the words, either the subject or the effect of his dwelling; and yet *montem*, the mountain, is the accusative.

The Genitive, according to the same learned writer, expresses all relations commencing *from* itself; and the Dative, all relations tending *to* itself. Yet, when I say, *editus regibus*, descended of kings, I express a relation commencing *from* the kings, who are, notwithstanding, of the ablative case, in the Latin: and *eripuit morti*, he rescued from death,

death, is in Latin dative, and expresses, for all that, a relation tending, not *to* death, but *from* it.—One may say indeed, that these are refinements in the language, and deviations from the primitive syntax. But I know not, how we are to judge of cases, except from the purposes to which they are applied in the languages that have them; nor on what authority we have a right to suppose, that the primitive syntax of Greek and Latin was different from that which we find in Greek and Latin authors.

In a word, every case, almost, is applied to so many purposes in syntax, that to describe its use in a single definition, seems to be impossible, or at least so difficult, and withal so unnecessary, that it is not worth while to attempt it. None of the antient grammarians, so far as I know, has ever made the attempt; and I believe it will be allowed, that in this sort of subtlety they are not inferior to their brethren of modern times.

§ 2. *Of Conjunctions.*

I divided Connectives into two classes; Prepositions, which connect words, and Conjunctions, which connect sentences.

A Conjunction may be thus defined: “ A
 “ part of speech, void itself of signification,
 “ but of such efficacy, as to join sentences
 “ together,

“ together, and show their dependence upon “ one another.” The Conjunction, says Aristotle, makes many *one*: and Ammonius compares the words of this class to those pegs and nails by which the several parts of a machine are united.

Perhaps it may be thought, that Conjunctions, as well as prepositions, do sometimes connect words; as when we say, He is a learned *and* a wise *and* a good man. But this sentence, when analysed, will be found to consist of three distinct sentences;—he is a learned man;—he is a wise man;—he is a good man; or,—he is learned,—he is wise,—he is good: which three would for ever remain distinct and separate, if we had no connecting words to unite them in one sentence; even as the several parts of a ship would remain separate, if we had no pegs or nails to fasten them together. So, when it is said, Peter and John went to the temple, it may seem, that the conjunction *and* connects only the two names *Peter* and *John*: but it really connects two sentences,—Peter went to the temple,—John went to the temple; for unless we suppose the words, *went to the temple*, to belong both to Peter and to John, the expression has no meaning.

In this account of the Conjunction, Scaliger, Sanctius, Vossius, Urbinus, and Mr. Harris agree. But Perizonius is of opinion, and Ruddiman seems to think, that conjunctions

junctions do sometimes connect words, and not sentences; as in examples, like the following: Saul *and* Paul are the same: This book cost a shilling *and* more: There is war between England *and* France. Each of these, no doubt, is one sentence, and, if we keep to the same phraseology, incapable of being broken into two. For, if instead of the first we say, "Saul is the same—Paul is the same," we utter nonsense; because the predicate *same*, though it agrees with the two subjects in their united state, will not agree with either when separate. If we say, instead of the second, "This book cost a shilling—this book cost more," we speak with little meaning, or at least inaccurately. And, instead of the third, if we say, "There is war between England — there is war between France," we fall into nonsense as before; because the preposition *between*, having a necessary reference to more than one, cannot be used where one only is spoken of.

Yet, from these and the like examples, I do not see that any exception arises to the general idea of this part of speech, as expressed in the definition. For in each of these a double affirmation seems to be implied; and two affirmations certainly comprehend matter sufficient for two sentences. If, therefore, not one of the examples given can, in its present form, be resolved into
two,

two, it must be owing, not to the want of ideas, but to some peculiarity in the expression. Let us, then, without adding any new idea, change the expression, and mark the consequence.

The first example, "Paul *and* Saul are "the same," is very elliptical. Its seeming import is, either that two different names are the same name, which cannot be; or that two different persons are the same person, which is equally absurd. To express the whole thought, therefore, in adequate language, we must say, "Paul and Saul are "names that belong to one and the same "man." And this plainly comprehends two sentences: Saul and Paul are names,—Saul and Paul belong to one and the same person. *

In the second example, are plainly implied two affirmations, and consequently two sentences. "This book cost a shilling"—(which is true, though not the whole truth) and—"This book cost more than a shilling."

Even three affirmations, and of course three sentences, may be supposed to be comprehended in the third example. "France "is at war—England is at war—They are "at war with one another." Taking it in another view, we may say, that here one assertion is made concerning the one country, and another of the same import con-

* See Part i. Chap. 1. Sect. 2.

cerning

cerning the other, and that there must by consequence be ideas to furnish out two affirmative sentences: "England is at war with France—France is at war with England."

In some sentences of this nature, the conjunction may be considered as superfluous. Where this happens, the meaning may be expressed in one sentence, without the aid of any conjunction: as, Peter went with John to the temple: Saul is the same with Paul.

Copulative conjunctions, therefore, where they are not quite superfluous, (as if we were to say, I saw twenty *and* four men, instead of twenty four), will I think be found in most, or perhaps in all cases, to connect together either sentences, or words that comprehend the meaning of sentences.

Sentences may be united, even when their meanings are disjoined, or opposed to one another. When I say, "Peter and John went *because* they were called," I join three sentences in one; and the two last are, as it were, the continuation of the first: Peter went—John went—they went *because* they were called. But if it be said, "Peter and John went, *but* Thomas would not go," though there are three sentences joined in one, as before, the import of the last is, by means of the particle *but*, set in a sort of opposition to the two first. Hence Con-

junctions

junctions have been divided into two kinds, *Conjunctive*, which join sentences, and also connect their meanings; and *Disjunctive*, which, while they connect sentences, disjoin their meanings, or set them, as it were, in opposition.

These two classes have been subdivided by Grammarians into several subordinate species. It would be tedious to enumerate all the arrangements that have been proposed. I shall just give the heads of Mr. Harris's subdivision; which will convey an idea of the various uses to which the Conjunction may be applied.

“ 1. The Conjunctions, that unite both
 “ sentences and their meanings, are either
 “ *Copulative* or *Continuative*. The Copula-
 “ tive may join all sentences, however in-
 “ congruous in signification: as, Alexander
 “ was a conqueror, *and* the loadstone is
 “ useful. The Continuative joins those sen-
 “ tences only which have a natural connec-
 “ tion; as, Alexander was a conqueror *be-*
 “ *cause* he was valiant.

“ Continuatives are of two sorts, *Suppo-*
 “ *sitive*, and *Positive*. The former denote
 “ connection, but not actual existence; as,
 “ You will be happy *if* you be good. The
 “ latter imply connection, and actual exist-
 “ ence too; as, You are happy *because* you
 “ are good.

“ More-

“ Moreover Positive Continuatives are
 “ either *Causal* or *Collective*. Those subjoin
 “ causes to effects; as, He is unhappy *be-*
 “ *cause* he is wicked: these subjoin effects to
 “ causes; as, He is wicked, *therefore* un-
 “ happy. *

“ 2. Disjunctive Conjunctions, which
 “ unite sentences while they disjoin their
 “ meaning, are either *Simple*, which merely
 “ disjoin; as, It is *either* John *or* James:
 “ or *Adversative*, which both disjoin, and
 “ mark an opposition; as, It is not John,
 “ *but* it is James.

“ Adversative Disjunctives are divided into
 “ *Absolute* and *Comparative*: Absolute, as
 “ when I say, Socrates was wise, *but* Alex-
 “ ander was not; Comparative, as in this
 “ example, Socrates was wiser *than* Alex-
 “ ander.

“ Adversative Disjunctives are further di-
 “ vided into *Adequate* and *Inadequate*: Ade-

* *Therefore* was formerly mentioned as an adverb.
 And an adverb it is, when, without joining sentences, it
 only gives the sense of *for that reason*. When it both
 gives that sense, and also connects, as when we say, “ He
 “ is good; *therefore* he is happy,” it is a conjunction.
 The same thing is true of *consequently*, *accordingly*, and
 the like. When these are subjoined to *and*, or joined to
if, *since*, &c. they are adverbs, the connection being made
 without their help; when they appear single, and unsup-
 ported by any other connective, they may be called con-
 junctions.

“ quate,

“quate, as when it is said, He will come *unless* he be sick, that is, his sickness only
 “will be an adequate cause to prevent his
 “coming; Inadequate, as if it were said,
 “He will come *although* he be sick, that is,
 “his sickness will not be a sufficient or ade-
 “quate cause to prevent his coming.”

That all the Conjunctions necessary in language may be referred to one or other of these heads, I will not affirm. Perhaps it is impossible to determine, how many may be *necessary*. This we know, that barbarous nations have but few; that cultivated tongues, like the Greek and Latin, have a considerable number, (the Latin upwards of eighty); but that of this number some, being synonymous with others, and introduced for the sake of variety, cannot be necessary; though they are useful, because they may be ornamental.

Yet from this last circumstance it must not be inferred, that there is a redundancy of connectives in these languages. We shall be inclined to think there is rather a deficiency, when we consider, that one and the same conjunction has often several different significations. Thus, the Latin *autem* denotes, *but, nay, besides, indeed, on the contrary*; and has other niceties of meaning, to which perhaps there are no correspondent particles in the English tongue. The true
 import

import of such connectives, as well as of other ambiguous words, can be ascertained only by the context. And it is a great fault, in teaching the Classics, when children are not inured to give to the conjunctions, which come in their way, that precise meaning, which an intelligent master will perceive that the context fixes upon them. For, if the scholar is permitted invariably to render *autem* (for example) by the English *but*, he must often lose the sense of his author; and, instead of being led by the connective to trace out the dependence of sentences, he will be more at a loss, than if that particle had been omitted.

Plutarch, in his Platonick questions, in order to account for that saying of Plato, that language is made up of nouns and verbs, has taken more pains than was necessary, to show, that the noun and the verb are of all parts of speech the most important. His reasoning, however, is rather too much in the way of allegory, to convey clear ideas and full conviction. True it is, as he says, that nouns and verbs may form sentences, independently on prepositions, articles, conjunctions, and adverbs; whereas these last cannot form sentences, nor have any distinct meaning, without nouns and verbs. It is also true, that, (as he proves by a quotation from Demosthenes), by leaving out conjunctions, one may sometimes join the more
A a
significant

significant words in closer union, and so give energy to particular passages: and that, from the want of articles, the Latin tongue is not the less perspicuous; nor Homer's Greek the less elegant, for the omission of them. Yet if, in the use of speech, we were to confine ourselves to nouns and attributives; and never have recourse to prepositions, to mark relations of place, nor to conjunctions, to ascertain the dependence of one part of our discourse upon another, I apprehend, that we should be much at a loss, even on common emergencies; and that, in matters of investigation and science, we must be absolutely incapable of accurate expression.

There are two ways of thinking, and, consequently, of speaking, and writing. We sometimes think miscellaneously, (as one may say) when the present thought has little connection with what goes before, or follows. At other times, our ideas proceed in a train; and the present is naturally introduced by the foregoing, and naturally introduces the subsequent. This last is no doubt the most rational, as it is the most methodical, way of thinking; for in this way, many different ideas acquire one tendency, and are all employed for the support and illustration of some one point, and of one another. In the one case, our thoughts resemble a multitude, in which are many individuals, but

but those are unconnected ; and, therefore, though there be great number, there is not proportionable strength. In the other, our thoughts may be compared to an army in order of battle, where the strength is in proportion to the number ; because the individuals are mutually dependent on, and supported by, one another ; so that the force of each may add to that of all the rest, and all the rest may be said to second the efforts of each individual.

Now Conjunctions are those parts of language, that, by joining sentences in various ways, mark the connections, and various dependencies, of human thought. And therefore, if our thoughts be really connected and mutually dependent, it is most likely (as every man in speaking and writing wishes to do justice to his ideas) that conjunctions will be employed, to make that connection, and those dependencies obvious to ourselves, and to others. And where there is, in any discourse, a remarkable deficiency of connecting particles, it may be presumed, either that there is a want of connection, or that sufficient pains has not been taken to explain it.

The style of the best authors of Greece and Rome abounds in conjunctions and other connecting words. Take any page in Cicero, especially where he speaks in his own person, and in the way of investigation, as

in his books of Moral Duties ; and you shall hardly see a sentence, that has not in, or near, the beginning, an *autem*, or *enim*, *sed*, or *igitur*, or some other connective : by which we may instantly discover the relation, which the present sentence bears to what went before ; as an inference, an objection, an illustration, a continuation, a concession, a condition, or simply as one sentiment subjoined to another by a copulative. The style of Seneca, on the other hand, and that of Tacitus, are in this respect deficient. Their sentences are short, and their connectives few ; so that the mutual dependence of their thoughts is rather left to the conjecture of the reader, than expressed by the author. And hence, we are told, it was, that the emperor Caligula remarked, (though we can hardly suppose Caligula to have been capable of saying so good a thing) that the style of Seneca was *Arenam sine calce*, Sand without lime ; meaning, that matter, or sense, was not wanting, but that there was nothing to cement that matter into one uniform and solid mass.

This uncemented composition has of late become fashionable among the French and their imitators. One of the first who introduced it was Montesquieu, an author of great learning and extraordinary penetration ; who, as he resembled Tacitus in genius, seems to have admired his manner, and copied
his

his style. Like him, and like Florus, of whom also he was an admirer (as appears from his *Essay on Taste*) he affects short sentences, in the way of aphorism; full of meaning, indeed, but so concise in the expression as to be frequently ambiguous; and so far from having a regular connection, that their place might often be changed without inconvenience. This in philosophical writing has a disagreeable effect, both upon the memory, and upon the understanding of the reader.

First, upon his memory. Nothing tends more to impress the mind with a distinct idea of a complex object, than a strict and natural connection of the parts. And therefore, when a discourse is not well connected, the sentiments, however just, are easily forgotten; or, if a few be remembered, yet their general scope and tendency, having never been clearly apprehended, is not remembered at all.

And, secondly, upon his understanding. To read a number of detached thoughts, although it may amuse the fancy, does not sufficiently exercise the rational faculties. Of such thoughts, that only which is present is attended to; and, if we understand it, we do all that is required of us. But, when we peruse a regular investigation, wherein many sentiments are employed to illustrate or evince one leading point of doctrine, we

A a 3

must

must attend, both to the present thought and to that which went before, that we may perceive the connection; we must also compare the several ideas together, in order to discern their agreement or disagreement, as well as the influence of all the premises in establishing the conclusion. This is a most wholesome intellectual exercise. It puts all our rational powers in motion, and inures us to a methodical way of thinking and speaking: and so quickens attention, strengthens memory, and gives direction and vigour to our inventive powers.

As the fashionable mode of unconnected composition is less improving to the mind of the reader, so it promotes a habit of inaccuracy and negligence in a writer. One of the greatest difficulties in writing is, to give a right arrangement to the several thoughts and parts, whereof a discourse is made up: and that arrangement is the best, in which the several parts throw most light upon one another. But when an author thinks himself at liberty to write without connection, he is at little pains to arrange his ideas, but sets them down just as they occur; sometimes taking up a subject in the middle, and sometimes at the end; and often quitting one point before he has discussed it, and recurring to it again when he ought to be engaged in something else. In a word, he is apt to be more intent upon the brilliancy
of

of particular thoughts, than upon their coherence: which is not more wise in an author, than it would be in an architect to build a house rather of round, smooth, and shining pebbles, than of stones of more homely appearance hewn into such figures as would make them easily and firmly incorporate; or, than it would be in any man, rather to thatch his body with gaudy feathers, or splendid rags, than to cover it with one uniform piece of cloth, so shaped and united, as to defend him from the cold, without incumbrance.

Conjunctions, however, are not the only words that connect sentences. Relative pronouns, as I formerly observed *, do the same; for a relative implies the force both of a pronoun and of a connective. Nay, the union by relatives is rather closer, than that by mere conjunctions. The latter may join two or more sentences in one; but, by the former, several sentences may incorporate in one and the same clause of a sentence. Thus, You see a man *and* he is called Peter, is a sentence consisting of *two* distinct clauses united by the copulative *and*; but, The man *whom* you see is called Peter, is a sentence of *one* clause, and not less comprehensive than the other. Yet relatives are not so useful in language, as conjunctions. The former make speech more concise; the

* Part II. Chap. i. Sect. 2.

latter make it more explicit. Relatives comprehend the meaning of a pronoun and conjunction *copulative*: conjunctions, while they *couple* sentences, may also express opposition, inference, and many other relations and dependencies.

Till men began to think in a train, and to carry their reasonings to a considerable length, it is not probable, that they would make much use of conjunctions, or of any other connectives. Ignorant people and children generally speak in short and separate sentences. The same thing is true of barbarous nations: and hence uncultivated languages are not well supplied with connecting particles. The Greeks were the greatest reasoners that ever appeared in the world; and their language, accordingly, abounds more than any other in connectives: of which, though we cannot now account for them all, we may be assured that few or none were superfluous.

Conjunctions are not equally necessary in all sorts of writing. In poetry, where great conciseness of phrase is required, and every appearance of formality avoided, too many of them would have a bad effect. In passionate language too, it may be proper to omit them; because it is the nature of violent passion to speak rather in disjointed sentences, than in the way of inference and argument.—Books of aphorism, like the Proverbs

verbs of Solomon, have few connectives; because they instruct, not by reasoning, but in detached observations. And narrative will sometimes appear very graceful, when the circumstances are plainly told, with scarce any other conjunction than the simple copulative *and*: which is frequently the case in the historical parts of Scripture.—When narration is full of images or events, the omission of connectives may, by crowding the principal words upon one another, give a sort of picture of hurry and tumult, and so heighten the vivacity of description; as in that line of Lucretius,

Vulneribus, clamore, fuga, terrore, tumultu.

But when facts are to be traced down through their consequences, or upwards to their causes; when the complicated designs of mankind are to be laid open, or conjectures offered concerning them; when the historian argues either for the elucidation of truth, or in order to state the pleas and principles of contending parties; there will be occasion for every species of connective, as much as in philosophy itself. In fact, it is in argument, investigation, and science, where this part of speech is peculiarly and indispensably necessary.

Sometimes, the repetition of a connective, even where it is not necessary, adds weight to a remonstrance, by calling the reader's
atten-

attention to each individual clause: as, “ *If*
“ there be any virtue, and *if* there be any
“ praise, &c. Will you sacrifice liberty,
“ and truth, and honour, and conscience,
“ and present convenience, and future re-
“ nown, and eternal felicity, and all to gra-
“ tify a tyrant?”

Grammarians have distinguished the conjunction into Prepositive, Subjunctive, and Common. The first is always the first word of a clause or sentence; as *et*, *aut*, *nec*, &c. in Latin; *and*, *unless*, *but*, &c. in English. The second is never the first word of a sentence or clause; as *too* in English, and *autem* in Latin. And the third may be either the first, or not the first, as the writer or speaker pleases; as, in English, *however*, *consequently*, *therefore*, &c; and, in Latin, *namque*, *ergo*, *igitur*, &c. This matter is to be determined, not by the sense of the words, or the nature of the thing, but merely by the fashion of the language.

There are conjunctions, that have an influence on the mood of the following verb; some governing the Indicative, and some the Subjunctive. If this were to depend on the meaning of the connective, and the nature of the mood, we might establish it as a rule, that all Conditional, Hypothetical, Concessive, and Exceptive conjunctions should take the Subjunctive mood, on account of their dependent character, which implies something

thing doubtful or contingent: and that, therefore, we ought to say, "*If he come* he will be welcome,"—not, "*If he comes*;" "*Though thou slay me*, yet will I trust in thee," — not, "*Though thou slayest*;" "*Except a man be born again*," (—not, "*is born*") he cannot see the kingdom of God;" "*Whether he come* as a friend or as a foe, I will use him honourably;" — not, "*Whether he comes*." Other conjunctions of a more positive, absolute, and independent signification, ought for the same reason to govern the Indicative: as "*The room is dark because the day is cloudy*:" "*Since he repents*, I forgive him: *As he is* a worthy man, he may be assured of my friendship."—But this rule is not without exception. It deserves, however, to be remembered; as it is generally attended to by Latin authors; and as in English we can seldom or never go wrong, if we follow it. *

* See above, page 256.

S E C T. II.

Of the ARTICLE.

THE words, that become significant by being joined to other words, I divided, in the beginning of this chapter, into two classes, the *Necessary*, and the *Useful*. The former, called *Connectives*, being now considered, it only remains, that I explain the latter, which are known by the name of *Articles*.

The word *article*, *articulus*, * *arthron*, properly signifies *a joint*. It would seem, that the first Grammarians thought there was something of a joining power in the words of this order. But, if they thought so, they were mistaken. The article is no connective. It is a *Definitive*: being used for the purpose of defining, ascertaining, or limiting, the signification of those words to which it is prefixed. Perhaps, however, they may have given it this name, with a view to some metaphorical allusion.

In order to discover its use, we must recollect, that all nouns, proper names excepted, are general terms, or common appel-

* ἀρθρον.

latives.

latives. The word *mountain* is equally applicable to all mountains, and the word *man* to all men. Every vessel of a certain size and form, which is made for sailing, may be called *ship*: and the terms *valour*, *bounty*, *wisdom*, belong to every person, who is valiant, bountiful, wise.

But, though it is true, of the *names* of things, that they are of *general* meaning, things themselves are all *individuals*. No one man is either less or more than one; and every man has peculiarities, whereby he may be distinguished from all others.

How, then, are we to reconcile the universality of names with the individuality of things? In other words: when we make use of a common appellative, as *man*, *house*, *mountain*, what method do we take to intimate, that we speak of one, and not of many; of an individual, and not of a species? There are several ways of doing this: and, particularly, it may be done by Articles, or Definitives.

For example: I see an animated being, which has no proper name, or of whose proper name I am ignorant. In speaking of it, therefore, I must refer it to its species, and call it *man*, *dog*, *horse*, or the like; or, if I know not the species, I refer it to its genus, and call it *animal*. But this animated being is itself neither a genus, nor a species;

species; it is an individual: and therefore, in speaking of it, so as to mark its individuality, I call it *a horse, a man, a dog, an animal*: which intimates, that I speak of one, and not of many; of an individual being, and not of a class of beings. This article, therefore, *A* or *An*, has the same signification nearly with the numerical word *one*. And accordingly, in French and Italian, the same word that denotes unity is also the article of which I now speak. Nay, in some of the dialects of old English, this seems to have been the case; for *an* is the same with *one* in the Saxon; and the vulgar in Scotland still use *a* (pronouncing it, as in the word *name*) in the sense of *one*; as *a day*, one day, "*a morning* I was early out," for, one morning.—Now observe, that, when it is said, I see a man, I see an animal, the *a* or *an*, though it ascertains the individuality, gives no further intimation concerning the thing spoken of. It is therefore called the *Indefinite article*.

Again: I see a certain animal, which I never saw before, or of which, though I may know to what species it belongs, I have no previous acquaintance; and I say, I see *an* elephant, *a* dwarf, *a* bear, &c. Next day, the same animal comes again in view; and I say, recognizing it as the same, There is *the* elephant, *the* dwarf, *the* bear; changing the former indefinite article into another, which

which not only intimates individuality, but also implies previous acquaintance. This, from its power of ascertaining some one individual, in preference to others of the same species, is called the *Definite article*: and it will appear in the sequel to be much more *useful* than the other.

We have, therefore, in English, two articles or definitives, *A* or *An* and *The*: the former applicable to *any one* of a kind or sort; the other used for the purpose of distinguishing *some particular one*. In French and Italian there are two correspondent articles.

In Greek, there is no indefinite article; the noun without an article having the same meaning with our indefinite article prefixed to a noun; as * *anér*, a man: but there is a definite article † *ho*, *hē*, *to*, which is for the most part of the same import with our English *the*; as ‡ *ho anér*, the man.

In the Hebrew, as in Greek, there is no indefinite article; but there is a definite article, which they prefix to the noun so as to make one word with it; and which, like the English article, has no distinction of gender or number.

In the Erse or Gaelick tongue, they have also a definite, but no indefinite, article.

* *ainn*. † *é, é, sé*. ‡ *é ainne*.

And

And the use of the article seems to have been pretty general in all the primitive tongues of the north of Europe, the Gothick, and Teutonick, as well as the Celtick; from which we may account for the prevalence of these little words in our modern tongues. For it is remarkable, that, though all the languages derived from the Latin have articles, yet the Latin itself has none. Whence then did they get theirs? I answer, from those northern nations who overturned the empire of Rome, and who, though they in part adopted the language of the vanquished Romans, did also introduce into it a great variety of their own words and idioms.

That which is very eminent is supposed to be generally known. Hence the definite article may convey an idea of eminence, as well as of previous acquaintance. *A king* is any king; but *the king* is that person whom we acknowledge for our sovereign. So when we say simply, the kingdom, the nation, the government, we of Great Britain mean the British government, nation, kingdom, &c.

Sometimes we denote eminence by omitting the article: we say, a member of parliament; an act of parliament; rather than, of *the parliament*. In this case, the thing spoken of is so very eminent, that it needs no article to make it more so; and besides, a parliament, in our sense of the word, is
an

an institution peculiar to British policy. The twelve French Parliaments are rather courts of justice than legislative assemblies. And, among the vulgar of North Britain, whose language abounds in French idioms, the same idea appears to be still annexed to the term: for they speak of appealing *to the British parliament* from a sentence of the Court of Session; though they know, that the appeal is made, not to the Parliament, (in the English sense of the word) but to the House of Lords.

In Greek too, as in English, the article is a mark of eminence: * *ho poiêtês*, the poet, is used for Homer, the greatest of poets; and † *ho stageirîtês*, the Stagyrîte, for Aristotle, who was the most famous of all the natives of the city Stagyra.

That which is nearly connected with us, or which from its vicinity we have been long acquainted with, becomes eminent in our eyes, even though, in itself, and compared with other things of the same kind, it be of no particular importance. One who lives near a very little town speaks of it by the name of *the town*. Every clergyman within his own parish is called *the minister* or *the parson*; and if in a village there be only one merchant or one smith, his neighbours think they distinguish him sufficiently, by calling

* ὁ ποιητής.

† ὁ σταγειρίτης.

him *the smith* or *the merchant*. A tree, a rock, a hill, a river, a meadow, may be spoken of in the same manner, with the same emphasis. He is not returned from *the hill*: he is bathing in *the river*: I saw him on the top of *the rock*: Will you take a walk in *the meadow*? A branch is blown down from *the tree*. In these examples, the definite article is used; because the thing spoken of, being in the neighbourhood, is well known, and a matter of some importance to the people who are acquainted with it.

That we may perceive, yet more clearly, the significancy of the articles, let us put the one for the other, and mark the consequence. When it is said, that "the ancestors of the present Royal Family were kings in England three hundred years before *the Conqueror*," the sense is clear; as every body knows, that the person here spoken of by the name of *the conqueror* is William duke of Normandy, who subdued England about seven hundred years ago. But if we say, that "the ancestors of the Royal Family were kings in England three hundred years before *a conqueror*," we speak nonsense.—Again, when it is said, that "health is *a* most desirable thing," there is no man who will not acquiesce in the proposition; which only means that health is *one* of those things that are to be very much

much desired. But, take the other article, and say, "Health is *the* most desirable thing," and you change it from true to false: for this would imply, that nothing is so desirable as health; which is very wide of the truth; virtue, and a good conscience, being of infinitely greater value.—Moreover, if, instead of "Man is born to trouble," we say "*A* man is born to trouble," there is no material change in the sense; only the former is more solemn, perhaps because it is more concise: and here, by the by, we may see, that the indefinite article is sometimes of no great use. But if we say, "*The* man is born to trouble," the maxim is no longer general; some one particular man is hinted at; and they to whom we speak would naturally ask, What man?

The learned Bishop Lowth has shown, in his excellent English grammar, that, in some instances, our translation of the New Testament has misrepresented the sense of the original Greek, by not attending to the article*. "When the Spirit of truth is come," says the translation, "he will guide you into *all truth*:" a promise, or

* The very title of the fifth book of the New Testament is mistranslated. It should be *ACTS of the Apostles*, not *THE ACTS*; the original being *ᾠκτακτα*, and not *αἱ ᾠκτακτα*. The error may appear minute, but it ought to be corrected; as the subject of the book corresponds to the one title, but by no means to the other.

a prophecy, which was not fulfilled by the event; for, after the coming of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, it is probable, that the Apostles remained ignorant of many truths; indeed, it is not possible, that they could know every thing. But in the Greek of this passage we have an article (omitted in the Translation) which gives a very different sense:—“ he will guide you into “ all *the* truth;” * that is, into all Evangelical (or Christian) truth; a prediction, which the event did fully justify. — Take another instance. When a Roman Centurion perceived the miraculous circumstances that accompanied the Crucifixion, our Bible informs us, that he said, “ Truly “ this was *the* Son of God :” which would imply, what is not likely, that this centurion was acquainted with our Saviour’s history and doctrines, and particularly knew, that he called himself the Son of God, in a peculiar and incommunicable sense. But the Greek has not this article; and should therefore have been rendered, “ Truly this was “ *a* son of God,” † or an extraordinary person,

* Εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν ἀληθειαν.

† Or rather, *a son of a God*; or, which is the same thing here, *the son of a God*, as Dr. Campbell renders it, in the work which he is now preparing for the press. See above, Chap. II; conclusion of Sect. i. The expression in Greek is *ὁ υἱος*, without any article; so that both words are equally indefinite. The phrase *υἱος τοῦ Θεοῦ*, which occurs sometimes, is properly *a son of God*. But the title

person, and superior to a mere man: a remark, which even heathens, though ignorant of our Saviour's history, might reasonably make, on seeing the prodigies of earthquake and darkness that accompanied his last suffering.

Sometimes, however, our two articles do not differ so widely in signification. Thus, we may say, "It is true as *the* proverb declares;" or, "it is true as *a* proverb, or "as *a certain* proverb declares, that," &c: and the change of the article does not make any material change in the sense. In like manner we say, "That heaven smiles at the perjury of lovers, is a pernicious maxim of *the poet*;" where the two last words allude, not to Homer, or Virgil, or any other poet of the first rank, but to Ovid, who was of an inferior order. And this sentence would lose nothing of its signification, if we were to substitute the other article, and say, "*A poet* has delivered a pernicious maxim, when he affirms, that heaven smiles at the perjury of lovers."—A similar idiom may be found in Greek. Thus Aristotle: "Change is the sweetest of all things, according to *the poet* *;" where *the poet*

title which our Saviour takes to himself, and which is given him by his Apostles, is always in the Gospel ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the Son of the (true) God*.

* Μεταβολὴ δὲ πάντων ὑλουντάτη, κατὰ τοῦ ποιητοῦ.
Ethic. ad Nicom. lib. 7.

signifies, not Homer, but Euripides; an author of great merit, but by no means equal to Homer, even in Aristotle's judgment. Now if the Greek article had been omitted, "Change is the sweetest of all things, as" *a poet* says," it is plain, that the sentence would have had the same meaning.

In some cases, the definite article conveys a peculiar sense. *A speaker* is any man who speaks; but *the Speaker* is the person who presides in the House of Commons. *An advocate*, in Scotland, is any one who is entitled to plead in the higher courts of justice; but *the advocate* is he, whose office corresponds to that which in England is held by the King's Attorney General. *A council* is any assembly of men met in consultation; but *the council* is, according to the English idiom, the King's Privy Council. So, in Greek, * *anthrōpos* is a man, but *ho anthrōpos* is sometimes (as in the Phædo of Plato) the publick executioner; † *pleion* is a ship, but *to pleion* is that particular ship, which the Athenians sent every year, on a religious embassy, to Delos.

Words, that are sufficiently definite in themselves, stand in no need of the article to make them more so. Such are the pronouns, *I, thou, he, she, and it*; to which, accordingly, the article is never prefixed,

* ἀνθρώπος, ὁ ἀνθρώπος.

† πλεον, το πλεον.

either in Greek, or in English *. And such, one would think, must those proper names be, that distinguish one individual from all others. And it is true, that, in many languages, the proper names of men and women appear without any article. But in Greek it is not always so: Socrates is sometimes called † *ho Sôkratês*; and his wife, *bê Xantippê*. Most grammarians consider this as a redundancy in the Greek; or, at best, as an expedient to mark the gender.

The Author of an Essay *On the origin and progress of language* affirms, that the Greeks prefixed the article to the proper names, either of persons who were eminent; or of such persons, whether eminent or not, whose names had been formerly mentioned in the discourse: and that, therefore, *ho Sôkratês* signifies, either *the famous Socrates*, or *the abovementioned Socrates*. This once appeared to me so plausible, that I adopted it; confiding in the accuracy and erudition of the Author; both which I know to be very great. But some Greek passages occurring to my memory first made me doubtful:

* In passages, like the following from Shakspeare,

Lady you are *the* cruellest *she* alive—
The fair, *the* chaste, *the* unexpressive *she*—
The *shees* of Italy will not betray—

the word *She* is not pronominal, but a noun of the same import with *woman*, or *lady*.

† ὁ Σωκράτης, ἡ Ξανθίππη.

and, on looking a little into books with this particular view, I was satisfied, that the learned writer is mistaken. See the introductory paragraph of the *Anabasis* of Xenophon; in which, without the article, Darius is named three several times, Parysatis twice or thrice, and Artaxerxes as often. See also the beginning of Xenophon's *Memorabilia*; where Socrates himself is mentioned by name twelve times (if I mistake not) without the article, before he is once mentioned with it. I am now, therefore, convinced, that those Grammarians are in the right, who consider the Greek article, when prefixed to proper names of men and women, as a pleonasm, or as an expedient, in certain cases, to clear the sense, ascertain the gender, or improve the harmony.

The Italians prefix the definite article to some of their most celebrated names; as *Il Dante, Il Petrarca, Il Tasso*; and even to famous singers and fiddlers, as *La Frasi, Il Senesino, Il Tartini*: in which they have of late been imitated by some of the people of London, who, speaking of favourite musicians, say, *The Mingotti, the Gabrielli, &c*; but this is affectation, and suits not the idiom of the English tongue. — Another fashion, not unlike this, has been lately introduced, which, though also contrary to idiom, will probably establish itself in the language, as it is now generally adopted:
“ I was

“ I was last night in company with a
 “ Mr. Such-a-one, who told us some good
 “ stories.” The indefinite article is here
 put for the word *one*; and the meaning is,
 that the person is not known, or very little
 known, to those who speak of him in this
 manner.

To the proper names of some great natural objects, as mountains and rivers, we prefix the definite article in English, as they also do in French; and say, the Alps, the Grampians, the Andes, the Thames, the Tiber, the Dee: but to single mountains however large we do not prefix it; we say, Etna, Atlas, Lebanon, Olympus, Morven, not the Etna, the Atlas, &c. — In France, they distinguish the names of certain countries by the definite article; as *la France*, *l'Angleterre*, *l'Espagne*; but this is not done in English. Indeed our way of applying the article differs in many respects from theirs: but I cannot enter into particulars, without quitting the tract of Universal Grammar.

When a proper name belongs to several persons, it may become a sort of common appellative, and take the article; as the Cæsars, the Gordons, the Howards. And the article may also be applied to distinguish one person from another of the same name; as
 “ *The* Pliny, who wrote the Natural His-
 “ tory, is not *the* Pliny who composed the
 “ pane-

“panegyrick on Trajan.” In this use, the definite article coincides nearly in sense with the pronominal article *that*. And this same pronoun *that* we sometimes use for the definite article.

Thus I presume it is used in a very solemn passage of Scripture; where Jehovah, appearing in the burning bush to Moses, declares his name in these words, “I am *that* I AM;” that is, “I am *the* I AM;” or “I am *the great* I AM:” I am he, who alone possesses perfect and independent existence. This example I the rather take notice of, because a learned author insinuates, that there is no sense in it, as it stands in the English Bible; and contends, that it should have been rendered, as in the Greek of the Septuagint, “I am the being,” or rather, “I am he who is.”* But it seems to me, that in our version the passage is not less significant. Indeed, if we pronounce it, as is commonly done, “I *am* that I *am*,” laying the emphasis on the two verbs, and without any emphasis on the pronominal article *that*, it will not appear to have any grammatical propriety. But let an emphasis be laid on *that*, which is here a most emphatical word; and another emphasis on the concluding words I AM, which are still more emphatical, because they are the name by which the Deity is here

* *Ego sum i. Gr.*

pleased to make himself known; and the passage will be found to be both intelligible and sublime.—The same emphatical use of the pronoun *that* occurs in other parts of the English Bible. “Art thou *that* my Lord “Elijah?” says Ahab’s messenger to the Prophet: that is, Art thou the *great* or the *celebrated* Lord Elijah? “This is *that* king “Ahaz,” says the historian, after specifying some of his wicked actions: This is the king Ahaz so *notorious* for his impiety.*

Articles being so important, it may be doubted whether I express myself properly, when I affirm, that they are useful in language, but not necessary; and whether the Latin tongue, which is supposed to have no article, must not, on that account, be very deficient in both perspicuity and energy. This matter deserves to be considered.

It is true, that many learned men have thought, that the want of an article is a great deficiency in the Latin tongue: and some modern authors have gone so far as to say, that this alone makes it improper for philosophy. Yet Quintilian, who understood Greek and Latin better, as I suppose, than any modern can pretend to do, and who also appears to have been a proficient in philosophy, declares, that the Latin tongue has no need of articles; and Scaliger, one

* 1 Kings xviii. 7. 2 Chron. xxviii. 22.

of the most learned men and ablest grammarians of latter times, is of the same opinion: for that, by means of *ipse* and *ille*, and some other pronouns, every thing of real importance, which the Greek article can express, may be signified in Latin. And I think they are right. If, for example, I am desired to translate those words of Scripture, in which the article is indeed most emphatical, "And Nathan said unto David, Thou art *the* man:" what is easier than to say, *Et dixit Nathan Davidi, Tu es ille homo*; or, more simply, *Tu es ille*; or, more simply still, for the context would bear it, *Tu es?* — "I am *that* I AM," may be rendered as emphatically in Latin, as in English or Greek, *Ego sum ille* *EGO SUM*; or, *Ego sum ille cui nomen* *EGO SUM*.

The first verse of St. John's Gospel, in which the articles are very significant, and which we translate exactly and literally from the Greek, "In the beginning was *the* Word, and *the* Word was with God, and *the* Word was God," may no doubt be rendered ambiguously in Latin thus, *In principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Verbum erat Deus**. For this might be so turned into English, as to produce nonsense and blasphemy. But that would be the fault, not of the language, but of the

* Castalio's translation of this verse is not much better.
trans-

translator. For one, who understands Greek and Latin, and is attentive to the meaning, and anxious to preserve it, would render the verse, as in the Port Royal Greek Grammar it is rendered, *In principio erat Verbum illud, et Verbum illud erat apud Deum, et illud Verbum erat Deus*:—which is as expressive, as either the English, or the Greek. If it be said, that this Latin is not elegant, on account of the repetition of the pronoun; I answer, first, that elegance is not to be expected in a translation so exactly literal; and, secondly, that in a sentiment of such importance, and which human wisdom could never have discovered, accuracy of expression is more requisite, than Classical purity. Had St. John written in Latin, he would have delivered this doctrine with equal energy, and probably with more elegance: which every person, who is acquainted with that language, knows might easily be done, if one is not limited to any particular phraseology.

When words are *materially* taken; that is, when they appear in a discourse as words only, and not as significant of any idea; as when we say, “The word *Boisterous* has a harsh sound;”—the article is useful in Greek, to indicate their nature. And I observe, that verbal criticks often introduce the Greek article in their Latin annotations, in order to point out such words when
they

they occur: as, "*Deest tò est* in manuscriptis quibusdam, *THE est* is wanting in some manuscripts." But this is an affectation, for which there is not the least necessity. "*In Manuscriptis quibusdam deest ILLUD est,*" is good Latin, and perfectly intelligible.

I deny not, that, in such Greek books as the *Analyticks* and *Metaphysicks* of Aristotle, there may be points of doctrine, which the Roman language, from its want of an article, cannot express, without either adopting some of the Greek terms, or giving a licence to barbarous latinity. But this is no material grievance. Many things are delivered in those books, as maxims of universal science, which are only grammatical observations on particular Greek words; and which, therefore, cannot be transplanted into a foreign tongue, unless those Greek words are transplanted along with them: even as, in an English grammar of the Latin language, you cannot speak so as to be understood, unless you illustrate what you say by Latin examples.—Besides, when we borrow arts or sciences from another nation, we must always borrow something of their native phraseology. Thus, in fortification, we use many French, in musick many Italian, and in rhetoric and medicine many Greek words. And thus, if we were to write the *History of England* in Latin, we should be obliged

obliged to coin many words that were never known in antient Rome; in order to express those peculiarities of Government and manners, of which the Romans could not speak, because they had no idea; as parliament, chancery, peers, commons, guns, bayonets, cannon, &c.—In fact, Aristotle's metaphysical writings seem never to have been in any repute among the Romans of the Classic ages. That intelligent people adopted what was valuable in the Greek philosophy: but those verbal subtleties and speculations, that had nothing to do with business, or the conduct of life, they neglected; and I think with good reason.

That articles are not of necessary use, even in Greek, may appear from this, that the Grecian poets, especially Homer, frequently omit them: though I know not, whether there be extant an author more perspicuous than Homer, notwithstanding his great antiquity. To which I may add, that, in the Attick dialect, articles are either used or omitted, according as they are thought to be more or less ornamental in discourse. — In English, the definite article may often be dropped, without any ambiguity; as, "Horse and man fell to the ground," for *the* horse, and *the* man. This omission is common in our burlesque poems; as, "And pulpit, drum ecclesiastick, Was beat with fist instead of a stick."

“stick :” that is, *the* pulpit was beat with *the* fist. And of so little account is our indefinite article, that it is never prefixed to nouns of the plural number: we say, “*A* man is coming,” if there be but one; but, if more than one, we say, “*Men* are coming.” The French, indeed, give a plural to their indefinite article; *un homme*, a man, *des hommes*, men, or some men: but this plural cannot in that, or in any, language be necessary, when in our own we hardly perceive that it is wanting.

Yet, that there are in Latin no ambiguities arising from the want of an article, I will not affirm. In the beginning of the *Eneid*, Juno, calling to mind those manifold grievances, which made her resolve upon the destruction of the Trojan fleet, exclaims,

Pallasne exurere classem

Argivum, atque ipsos potuit submergere ponto!

These words may bear two interpretations: Could Pallas burn *the* Grecian fleet! or, Could Pallas burn *a* Grecian fleet! The last is the true one; for the whole Grecian fleet was not burned by Pallas, but that squadron only, which belonged to Ajax the son of Oileus. Now here is an ambiguity, which Virgil might easily have avoided, if he had written in a language that
either

either had an indefinite article, like the English, or, like the Greek, could have conveyed an indefinite sense by omitting the article. But of so little importance is this ambiguity, that I doubt whether the poet would have thought it worth his while to guard against it; as no person, who knows any thing of the poetical history, could be at a loss to discover the meaning. Many things occur both in speech and in writing, which they only can understand, who attend to what goes before, and to what comes after. And if we be not in some measure prepared for the study of an author, by a little previous acquaintance with his subject, we must in the clearest language find obscurity, especially in the beginning of a work. As to the obscurity in question, it is certain, that, without the help of any article, and by the native powers of the Latin tongue, Virgil could have avoided it; as it is probable he would, if he had thought it a blemish.

I would not insinuate, that the Latin is as comprehensive a language as the Greek. Both Lucretius and Cicero complain, that on the subject of philosophy it is deficient. But this, I presume, is not owing to the want of an article; nor do they say, that it is: but to some other circumstances; whereof I need only mention this one; that the Latin tongue was completely formed and

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polished,

polished, before any attempt was made to write philosophy in it. So that, when Cicero introduced the Greek learning, he was obliged to coin several words, which, notwithstanding his authority, never became current; and often to express the Greek idea by a Greek word, because he could not find a Latin one of the same signification.

But, whatever we determine in regard to the present question, this at least must be granted; that if, from its want of articles, the Latin tongue be less simple, and sometimes less perspicuous, than the Greek or English, it is in general more concise than either. By the absence of these little words, the more important parts of the expression are permitted to have a closer coherence. And therefore, though the Latin may be less adapted to the abstruser philosophy, it is, however, as susceptible, as even the Greek itself, of all the charms of poetical, historical, and oratorical composition.

The great excellence of the Greek is simplicity; and that power, which it possesses unrivalled, of adapting itself so easily to every subject, and every science. In Homer and Isocrates, it may be thought more *harmonious*, than any other language: but I can hardly admit, that in this respect the Latin is inferior, when modulated by Cicero and Virgil. Its dual number, optative mood,

13

middle

middle verb, second aorist, and second future, from which some would fain persuade themselves that it derives part of its pre-eminence, I must, till I see them better explained than they have hitherto been, consider as superfluities: which make it more difficult, indeed, in the acquisition, and somewhat more various in the sound, but contribute nothing to its significancy. Its preterperfect, aorist, and article, give it some advantage over the Latin; but the English, and other modern languages, have also an article, aorist, and preterperfect. In fact, Grammarians seem to me to speak very absurdly, when they call every tongue barbarous, except the Greek and Roman. The language of such men as Milton, Addison, Boileau, Tasso, and Metastasio, cannot be barbarous. Else how comes it, that the greatest masters of Classick learning find it so difficult to do justice to those authors by translation. If Dobson's *Paradisus Amissus*, the exactest poetical version, perhaps, that ever was written *, does not deserve to be called barbarous, I should be glad to know, in what sense of the word, or with what

* I once thought (see the Conclusion of an Essay on the Usefulness of Classical Learning) that Homer was of all poets the most fortunate in a Translator. I had not then seen Dobson's incomparable performance: and the English *Eschylus*, by my very learned, ingenious, and worthy Friend, the Rev. Mr. Potter, was not then published.

propriety, the original *Paradise Lost* can be so called.—But English is not so elegant as Latin and Greek. Be it so. Yet, would it not be hard to call one a barbarian, merely because one has not reached the summit of politeness? The less elegant a language is in its structure, the more merit have they who write elegantly in it. If St. Paul's Cathedral were of Parian marble, instead of Portland stone, its appearance might be more splendid; but the sublime imagination of Sir Christopher Wren would not be more conspicuous.

It was said, that in English the indefinite article is not prefixed to nouns of the plural. It should have been added, that when an English plural noun is a *Collective*, that is, when by referring many, or more than one, to a class, it bestows unity upon them, it may then assume the indefinite article. Thus we say, not only *a dozen*, *a score*, *a hundred*, but also *a few*, and *a great many*; *a many* is found in Shakspeare. *An eight days* is old English; for it occurs in the Bible, and is still a vulgar idiom in Scotland. It was once, no doubt, considered as a collective; like the word *fort-night* or *fourteen-night*. But this remark, like many others in the discourse, belongs not to Universal Grammar.

And now, to conclude. It appears, that, to constitute a language as perfect as the
Latin,

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Latin, NINE sorts of words, or parts of speech, are necessary: the Noun, Pronoun, Adjective, Participle, Verb, Adverb, Interjection, Preposition, and Conjunction. The Latin Grammarians, indeed, enumerate only eight; because they improperly refer Nouns and Adjectives to the same class. In Greek, English, Italian, French, Hebrew, and many other languages, there are TEN parts of speech: the Noun, Pronoun, Adjective, Participle, Verb, Adverb, Interjection, Preposition, Conjunction, and Article.

According to Aristotle, the parts of speech are four: the Article, Name, Verb, and Connective. This is not so inaccurate, as at first sight it may seem to be: for we may suppose, that to the Name he refers both the Noun, and its representative the Pronoun; to the Verb, (or Attributive), the Adjective, Participle, Verb (strictly so called), and Adverb, and consequently the Interjection; and, to the Connective, both the Conjunction and the Preposition. Yet I do not think this division accurate. For there are many Adverbs, those of time and place, for example, which cannot by any just reasoning be proved to belong to the class of Attributives; and the same thing is true of the Interjections.

Plato reduces all the parts of speech to two, the Noun and the Verb: which his followers endeavour to vindicate, by urging, that every word must denote, either a Substance,

stance, or the Attribute of a Substance ; that by the Noun, and Pronoun, Substances are signified, as Attributes are by the Attributive ; and that Attributives are spoken of, by the antient Grammarians, under the general denomination of Verb. But neither is this satisfactory. For there are many words in language, as articles and connectives, which in themselves cannot be said to signify either Substance or Attribute ; because, when taken separately, they signify nothing at all.

If it be asked, What sorts of words are most, and what least, necessary ; the following answer may be collected from what has been evinced in the course of this long investigation. The Noun, Pronoun, Verb, Participle, Adjective, Preposition, and Conjunction, seem to be essential to language : the Article, Interjection, and most of the Adverbs, are rather to be called useful, than necessary, Parts of Speech.

T H E E N D.



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